



Blazing the Trail

An anecdotal account of Montgomery
Community College's early years.

Edited by Michele Haywood



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Community College's early years.

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to

“students who worked full-time jobs and attended classes during their ‘off’ time, balancing both workplace and classroom demands; students who brought to the classroom tremendous academic potential, a wealth of life experiences, and the determination to sacrifice and persist until they reached their goals; students who built skills for a career or for a career change; and students who shared with us that they hoped they were modeling a new and better way of living and paving the way for their children to access educational opportunities, too.”

*(Ken & Sue Jarvis,
MTI Instructors)*

This book is dedicated to

every student who walked through the doors of Montgomery Community College with a goal, who believed education was an important part of that goal, and who entrusted his or her education to Montgomery Community College.

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ere at when gan 21-
General Assembly appropriated \$1/2-million for the establishment of Industrial Education Centers.
The five centers which were created began to answer the demands of an awakening state. Young people having just graduated from high school entered the doors of these schools to receive the technical training North Carolina's industry was handing. Adults who never attended to "go back to school" al knowledge and their 50's.

completion of progress made in developing a center for education in Montgomery.
Also, equipment and making donations. The pil is expected to have all ment installed by the November.
Instruction in the p is a cooperative ver tween the County Boa cation and MTI. Duri two shifts of 2 1/2 in length are operat dents from the cour schools enrolled. gomery High Sch attend class morr Montgomery Hig afternoons

when citizens will nd referendum - of the cost of apus for MTI. If ises, this money ted by \$632,022 e land on which l be constructed y Colonel Reese
passes, a tax ents per \$100 quired to retire act alone will ve reaction, but mistake to allow eat the bond
to meet present requ expand in the imm- more adequate facil provided. That's wt referendum is all abc MTI, we are conv investment in the Montgomery County. does not take the place with the public schools is entirely different. A couple of other thin considered carefully before making a dec bond issue. First of all, if the bot there is a very good cha state matching moni withdrawn. This won

Foreword

This volume is a compilation of memories shared by individuals who served, worked for, or attended Montgomery Technical Institute. It is not a history of the college. The memories in this volume may not be entirely accurate. As with most memories, they grow bigger and better or fonder with age. Those who shared their stories also shared their affection for the people they worked with—their fellow employees, and worked for—their students. They shared their belief that a little college in rural Montgomery County could change people's lives for the better, and they shared their commitment to that belief.

Given constraints of time, this book is limited in scope to those persons who could be reached for interviews every week. Since there were more interviews than weeks, much of the story has been left untold. My sincerest apologies to the persons whose names do not appear in this book. You and your stories are important. I encourage everyone who has a story or memory to share it on our MCC Retirees and Alumni Facebook page at

[www.facebook.com/
montgomerycommunitycollegealumni](http://www.facebook.com/montgomerycommunitycollegealumni)

Acknowledgments

This compilation would not have been possible without the help of many people who shared their stories with us. Thank you for giving us your insights and sharing your memories.

A special thanks to Bruce Turner who has a mind like a steel trap and can remember everything! Also special thanks to the MCC retirees group that meets every other third Thursday at Hometown BBQ, who got the ball rolling and gave us direction.

Many thanks to Mary Anderson, past Public Information Officer at MTI who conducted the majority of the interviews and who wrote the majority of the stories which appear here and which appeared in the Montgomery Herald every week.

Many thanks to Tammy Dunn, the Herald's editor, who kindly gave us newspaper space each week.

I would also like to acknowledge the Montgomery Herald for the various newspaper photographs that appear in this volume.

To all those who were not mentioned within these pages, but who were dedicated to MCC and gave their lives to help the students succeed—instructors who were here early in the morning, late at night, and sometimes slept in their offices—staff members who paid for students' college expenses or bought groceries or took them in because they couldn't afford to pay rent. These are the stories that have not been told because there simply wasn't time to gather them all. We thank you now for your dedication and your service.

STARTING FROM SCRATCH

"The history of MCC is something people ought to know and not take for granted that it just happened. The founders realized a school needed to be there and they were a group who had a sense of being able to get things done."

*(Jim Ray,
Social Sciences Instructor,
1971–1980)*

Firsts

IN THE MID-1960s, A GROUP OF FORWARD-thinking Montgomery County leaders who valued education, and who recognized the need for job training after high school and for a way adults could earn a high school diploma, campaigned the state legislature to get a technical institute for Montgomery County. There was a movement in North Carolina at that time to create community colleges, so the time was right to act. It may have seemed unlikely that Montgomery County could support a college; nevertheless, approval was granted and the North Carolina State Board of Education issued a charter of establishment to Montgomery Technical Institute on September 7, 1967.

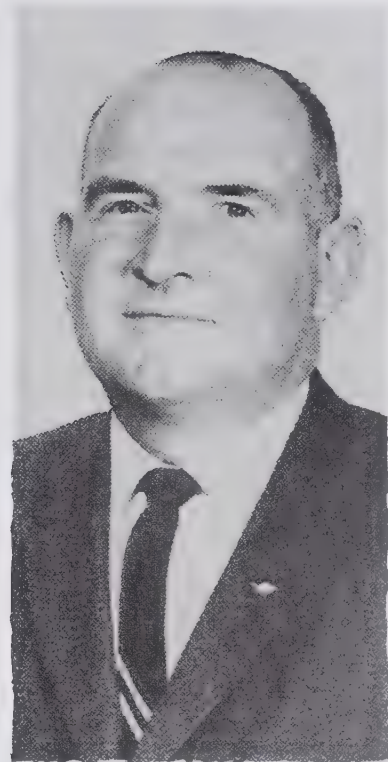


Dallas Herring (right) presents the charter for Montgomery Technical Institute to MTI President David Bland, 1968.

"Montgomery Technical Institute was the result of a political deal between a governor and a Montgomery County legislator. Which legislator is a matter open to debate as several have been credited with the deal."

(Bruce Turner, first Director of Learning Resources, Director of Continuing Education, Foundation Director, two terms as Interim President, 1968–2002)

A community college for Montgomery County was dear to J.F. Allen's heart and was one of his campaign promises to the county when he ran for the NC Senate in 1966. Mr. Allen introduced a bill for a technical institute in Montgomery County, one of eight bills for technical institutes introduced that year. The state appropriated funds for the other seven, but not for Montgomery. Mr. Allen recalls that Governor Dan Moore was supporting an insurance bill and Allen had it tied up. He had made many friends in the Senate:



"The governor invited me to breakfast at his house. He said he needed my help on the insurance bill. I told him that I had promised the folks in Montgomery County a technical institute. If I got the institute, he would get his insurance bill. Then I thanked him for the breakfast and left. Later that day, two of the governor's aides came to see me and told me Montgomery would get a technical institute. I told them the governor would get his insurance bill passed."

(J.F. Allen, MCC Trustee 1969–1989, Board Chair 1983–1989, pioneer in the legislature)



ABOVE: First Board of Trustees. Left to right: Charles Johnson, President Bland, E. Coleman, H. Scott, F. Taylor, J. McRae, J. Capel, J. Kerns, R. Liles. (Montgomery Herald, 1968)

Once the charter was established, an eight-member Board of Trustees was appointed to the Institute as directed by law: two by the Montgomery County Board of Education, two by the County Commissioners, and two by the Governor. The first trustees were Jesse S. Capel, Frederick L. Taylor, J.C. McRae, Robert L. Liles, Jr., John T. Kern, Eddie B. Coleman, Harold A. Scott, Sr., and Hubert W. Moss. Jesse S. Capel was the first Board Chair and served for 16 years. At age 34, Capel was the youngest board chair in the state.

“None of us were quite sure what a technical institute was, but we knew we wanted to train people for jobs and give them opportunities to learn about whatever interested them.”

*(Jesse Capel,
first Board Chair,
1967–1983)*

“We didn’t have a guidebook to go by. We had to use our best judgment to decide which classes would best serve the citizens of the county, hired the best teachers we could get, and hired the first president.”

(J.F. Allen)

David H. Bland

First President of Montgomery Technical Institute 1968-1971

"David Bland was a former Baptist minister.

He approached his job with a missionary zeal—'Do it for everybody and exclude nobody'—and he was able to bring on board people who had a similar feeling for the work."

(Bruce Turner)

"Mr. Bland led us through the early years of getting established and educating the community on what a technical institute could do for the county."

(Jesse Capel)



From: Pittsboro, NC
B.A. Wake Forest University
M.A. NC State University

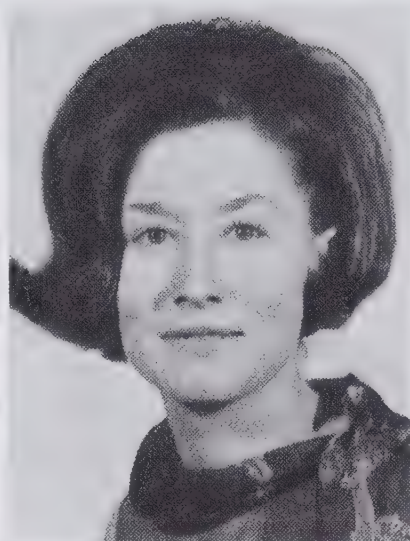
Interviewed by Dallas Herring, Chairman of the State Board of Education/Department of Community Colleges and founder of the Community College system.

During his tenure, MTI grew from 68 to 258 full-time equivalent students.

In March 1969 Bland was appointed Chairman of the Resolution and Program of Work Committee in Washington, D.C. by the Board of Directors of the American Vocational Association.

David H. Bland was appointed as Montgomery Technical Institute's first President on January 3, 1968. Bland was 30 years old when he began to lead MTI and establish it in the community. That made him the youngest community college president in North Carolina at the time. What no one anticipated was that the staff David Bland and the trustees put together was a group of determined, hard-working men and women who would dedicate their lives to building a school that they believed in and would sacrifice their time and personal lives to make work.

First Staff

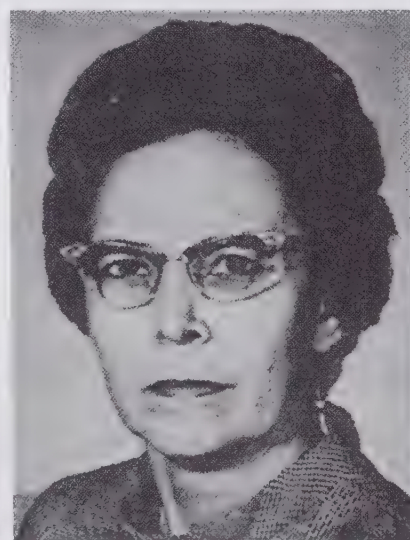


Peggy McMillan Brewer

Secretary to Administrative Assistant,
Assistant Bookkeeper &
Bookstore Manager

Jane Hancock

Secretary to Director of Student Personnel
& to Director of Occupational Education

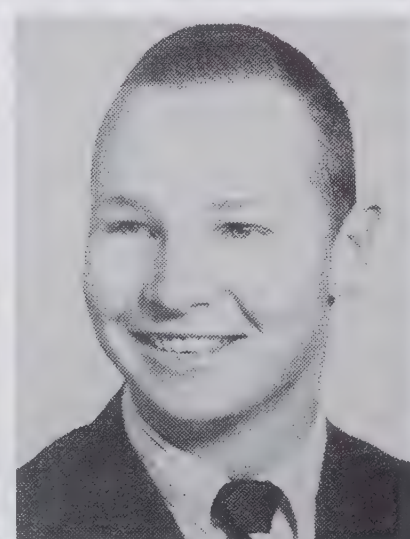
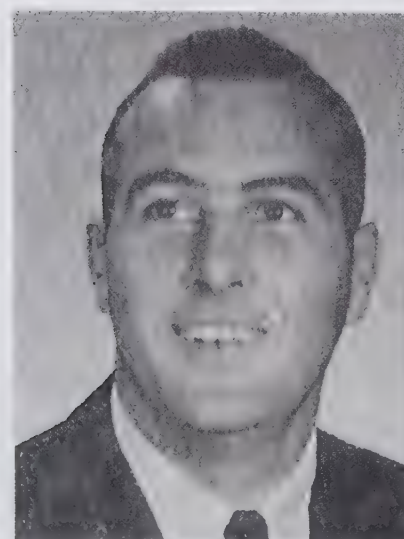


Decatur Jones

Director of Vocational
& Technical Programs

Virginia Jones

Bookkeeper/Business Manager



J. Ronald Kincaid

Administrative Assistant

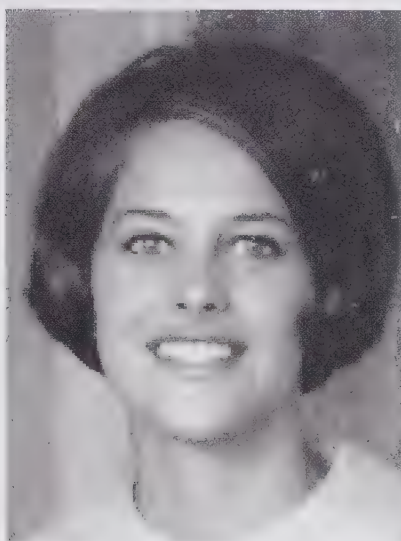
Phil Kissell

Evening Coordinator
of Learning Center

MANY STAFF CAME AND WENT during the early years. These are some of the first “MTI Family” members whose voices are heard throughout this volume.

Carolyn Lemonds

Receptionist and Secretary to President



Shirley Lowery

Secretary to Area Consultant
& Secretary to President



R. “Chuck” Marsh

Director of Continuing Education

Pat Mashburn

Secretary to Director of Continuing
Education & to Administrative Assistant



Eugene Mercer

Director of Student Personnel Services

Bruce Turner

Coordinator of Learning Center

First Campus



"There was not a lot of knowledge of the school's founding or its purpose. Several staff members and I spent many days going about the county talking to people individually or to their respective clubs or churches. It really was an educational process for the county."

(David Bland)



THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION moved from its Page Street location to the former Peabody School in Troy. MTI located its administrative offices in the Page Street building but classes were located wherever there was space.



Page Street Building, circa 1968.

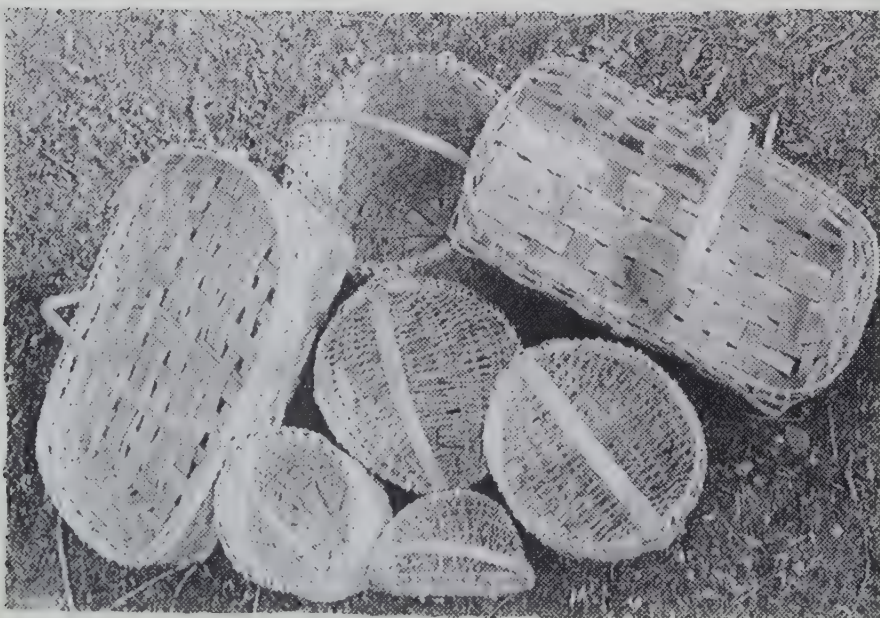
First Non-Credit Classes

MOST PROGRAMS WERE TAKEN for a “test drive” as non-credit classes. The ones with the most interest were developed and continued. Some of the “keepers” were:

Art, Ambulance Training,
Electrical Installation & Wiring,
Fire Training, Law Enforcement,
Radio & TV Repair,
Small Gas Motors,
Upholstery, and Welding.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Electrical Installation & Wiring; Art (the longest continuously-running con-ed class at the college. Earliest instructor was Mari K. Spear); Small Gas Motors (instructor E.J. Phillips pictured, third from left).



“Charlie Singleton had learned how to split white oak and make baskets from his mother, who learned it from her mother, and on back. He had the oak wood in his backyard, everybody knew him, so we met there and he taught them to cut the oak splits and weave the baskets. These baskets last for generations.”

(Bruce Turner)



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Law Enforcement; Welding; Bricklaying (instructor Thomas Neal, far right); Upholstery; Stenoscript (instructor Ellen Turner, far right); Ambulance Training.

"The comfort of taking classes in their neighborhoods made people more comfortable to venture further for adult education courses and get their high school equivalency diplomas. Now that was something to be proud of, and they came on campus to take vocational courses. Building support from the grassroots gave the people a sense of ownership in their technical institute."

*(Mary Anderson,
Public Information Officer,
1979—1981)*



First Adult-Ed Classes

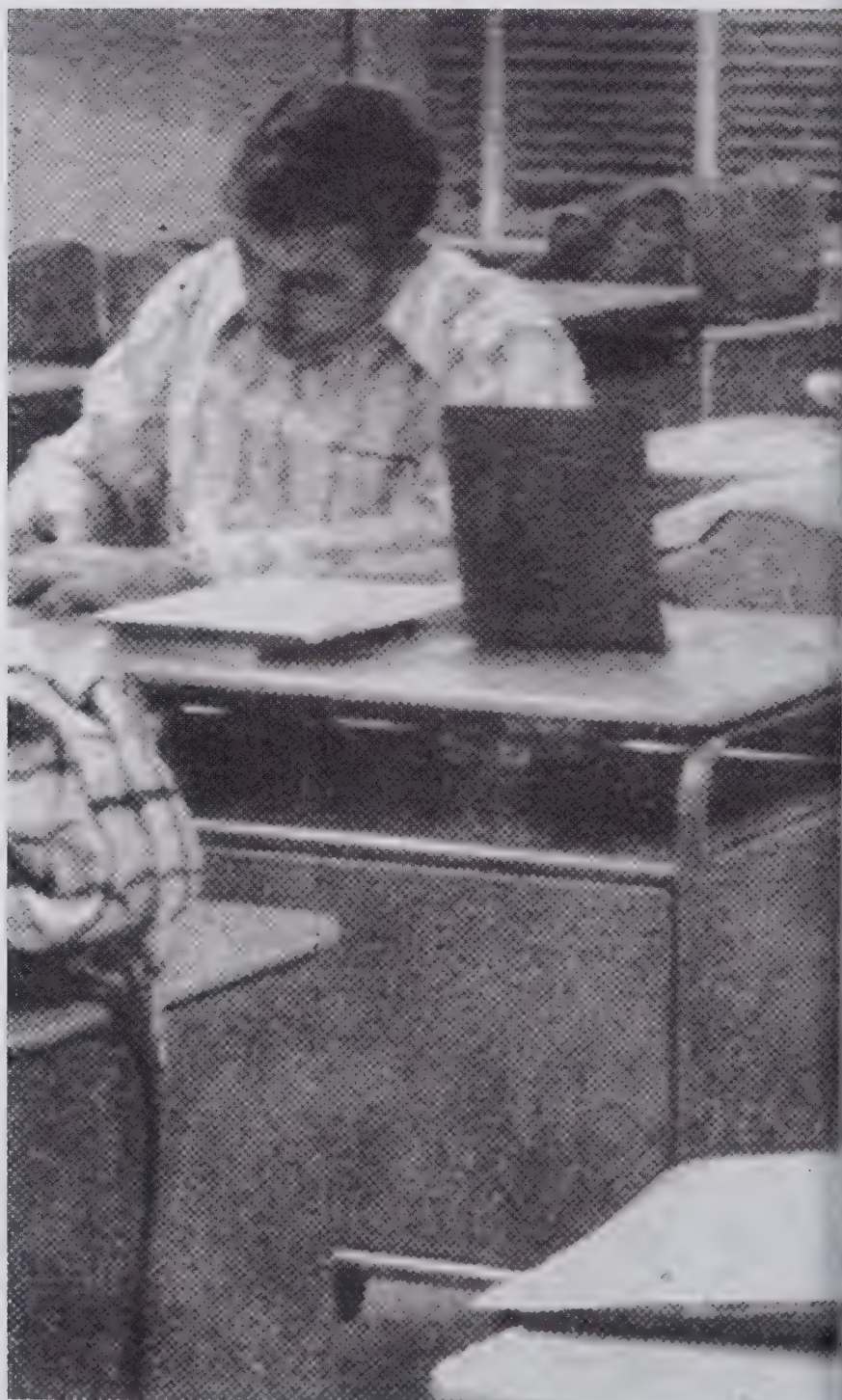


"Bruce Turner, Chuck Marsh and myself, anyplace we were allowed, we went. We visited every industry in the county. We went to all the town meetings. We met with every civic organization. We got out into the community. We developed relationships with all of them."

*(Ron Kincaid,
Administrative Assistant
to President Bland,
1968—1971)*

ADULT BASIC EDUCATION AND ADULT High School Diploma classes were the first classes offered starting in 1968 and were free to the public. General Education Development (GED) classes were added in 1969.

Phil Kissell, Evening Learning Center Coordinator, joined the small staff in 1970 and jumped right into the mission of recruiting students, including talking to a group of Springs Mills third-shift employees about taking GED classes at 3:30 a.m. GED classes were set up anywhere a group wanted to earn a high school equivalency.



Fast Facts:

**Aug 1
1969**

MTI became an
authorized GED
testing center

1969
Testing
Fee

\$3

In 1969 only

26%

of adults in Montgomery
County had completed
high school.

Many went to work to support
families, and textiles offered a
good wage at the time.



“Early on, we spent a lot of time in a counseling/ advising mode to build self-confidence in people to convince them that they could go back to school; they could get a high school diploma; they could learn a trade. Many people were actually afraid to set foot on a college campus because they didn’t believe in themselves.”

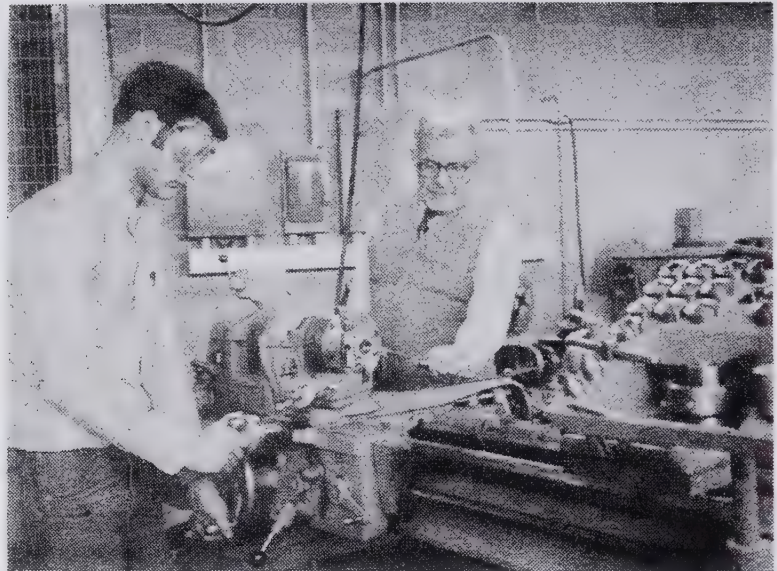
*(Phil Kissell,
Evening Learning Center Coordinator,
VP of Student Services & Instruction,
1970–2001)*

First Degree Programs

FULL TIME CURRICULUM STUDENTS were accepted in August 1968. First programs approved by the Board were: Secretarial Science, Business Administration, Industrial Maintenance, and Nurse Assistant, followed by Practical Nursing in 1969.

OPPOSITE PAGE: First Program Heads and early instructors.

Industrial Maintenance



Secretarial Science



First Nurse Assistant Certificates: President Bland presents Mrs. Vassar Mattox her certificate. Back row, left to right: Lois Chambers, Shirley Jenkins (instructor), Elizabeth Chambers, Mae Herrin. From the Montgomery Herald, November 1968.

"One of the fine features of MTI is the institution's flexibility. Programs of instruction at MTI can be tailor-made to meet the demands of the community."

(Montgomery Herald, February 1969)

Secretarial Science

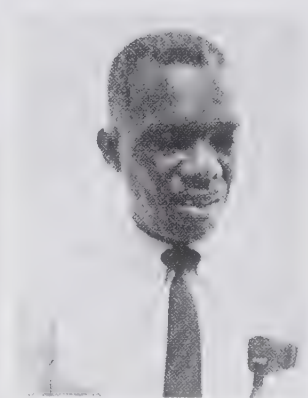


Ellen Turner
Program Head

Business Administration



Charles Kendall
Program Head



Robert Belle
Business Instructor

Industrial Maintenance



E.C. Warner
Instructor



R.E. Roberts
Instructor

*Nurse Assistant
& Practical Nursing*



Shirley Jenkins
Program Head



First MTI graduation, June 1970. **LEFT:** John McIntyre (Business Administration) stands at the podium. Other graduates are Mary Alsobrook (Secretarial Science) and Lewis Lemonds (Business Administration). **RIGHT:** graduates pictured are Harold VanDerveer, Jr. (Business Administration) and Glennie Caudle (Secretarial Science).

First Student Activities



THE FIRST STUDENT CHRISTMAS party was held in December 1968 at the Montgomery Country Club. Practical Nursing instructor, Shirley Jenkins, was the student government advisor and attended. The students wanted to put talcum powder on the dance floor and Shirley told them to go ahead.

Shirley said, "I was dancing with Ingram (her husband) when my heel slid forward on the powder and I fell backward and caught myself with both hands on the floor."

Ingram said he had made a turn and when he came back around he was suddenly eye-to-eye with the Chairman of the Board, Jesse Capel, instead of his wife. Surprised, both men looked down and found Shirley sprawled on the floor. As it turns out, she broke both her wrists in the process of breaking her fall. She and Ingram quietly left the party and Dr. Highsmith set her wrists at Montgomery Memorial Hospital's E.R.

When Shirley's classes started next spring she never missed a beat. She taught with both arms in casts for the next six weeks.



On Thursday, October 23, 1969, "inauguration ceremonies were held for the first Student Government Association (SGA) officers in the history of MTI." (From the Montgomery Herald, October 30, 1969.) Below is a picture of the first SGA officers. Left to right: Bruce Turner, faculty advisor; Sue Dunn, secretary-treasurer; John McIntyre, president; Steve Hunsucker, vice president; Dick Randall, director of student personnel.



GROWING PAINS

"There were times when we were in survival mode, but the constant factor was that we cared about people and we knew how much the citizens needed this opportunity for higher education and job training."

(Phil Kissell)

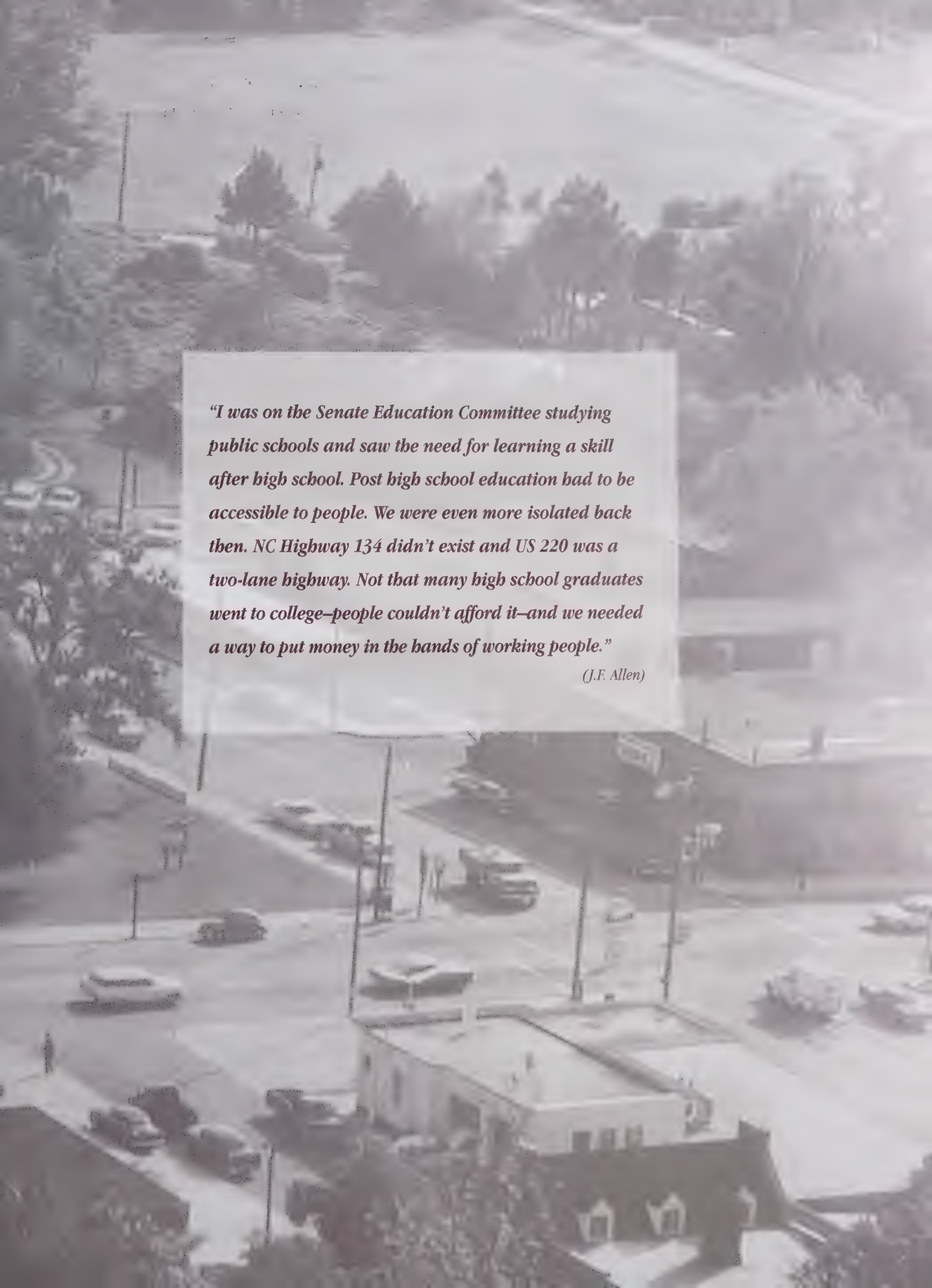
"In spite of never having enough funding, we all worked our butts off. We were all in the same boat and did whatever we could for our students and for each other. We put the county on the map in a lot of ways."

*(Bleece Jordan,
Auto Mechanics instructor,
1976–1997)*

THERE WERE MANY WHO BELIEVED THE COLLEGE could never survive. The size of the county dictated the size of the school in many aspects so recruiting was everyone's first priority. The determination of the staff, their belief that education could improve lives, and that anyone who wanted an education should be able to have one, was what kept them pushing forward.

"We saw the value of the school to the county, but we had to convince the citizens that they did have skills and they were capable of making their lives better. We joked later that we were just too young and stupid not to know we couldn't do it, so we forged ahead."

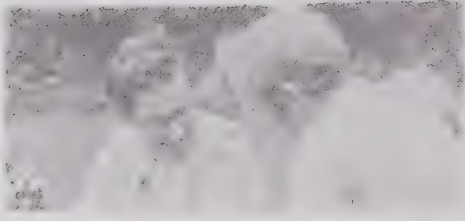
(Bruce Turner)

An aerial photograph of a school campus. In the foreground, there's a large, light-colored building, likely a school, with a flat roof and several windows. To its right is a smaller, darker building. A large parking lot with several cars is visible between the buildings. In the background, there are more trees and a road. A large, semi-transparent white rectangular box is overlaid on the middle of the image, containing a quote in italics.

"I was on the Senate Education Committee studying public schools and saw the need for learning a skill after high school. Post high school education had to be accessible to people. We were even more isolated back then. NC Highway 134 didn't exist and US 220 was a two-lane highway. Not that many high school graduates went to college—people couldn't afford it—and we needed a way to put money in the hands of working people."

(J.F. Allen)

On Doing Whatever it Took



"Everyone I worked with cared so much about the college—they wanted to see the school succeed. Administrators put in 12-15 hour days. They didn't punch a timeclock. They did whatever it took."

*(Barney Greene,
Evening Coordinator and
first Purchasing Agent,
1973–2009)*

"We had a building full of good people who got along and worked together. Nobody blinked when an administrator walked down the hall or came into a classroom. There was never that 'Here comes the boss—everybody look busy' attitude. They were more likely to say, 'Hey, come in here, we got a problem.'"

*(Ted Blake,
Director of Occupational Extension
& Dean of Instruction,
1971–1983)*

ENROLLMENT, WHICH GENERATED STATE FUNDING, was part of the difficulty in getting the programs off the ground. In order to support itself, a program had to have enough students to earn the funds from the state to pay for it. Enrollment was always a main objective for the college. This meant that if the students weren't comfortable coming to the college for classes, the college brought the classes to the students.

Chuck Marsh and Bruce Turner recognized the unlimited talent in the county. People were making things and doing things that had been handed down for generations.

"Bruce and I went out and put a class anywhere we could find eight or ten people who were interested—anywhere from the middle of a swamp to tiny little churches."

*(Chuck Marsh,
Director of Continuing Education,
1968–1971)*

"Chuck took a backwoods preacher approach to reach out to the citizens. They cooked a hog or two, gathering people who were local legends at it and evangelizing to them about education."

(Bruce Turner)



Biscoe class at Weavertown Community Building.

"I have never stopped being amazed at what people can do. They have incredible talent and they just didn't realize how smart they were or what special talents they had. Recruitment was my major responsibility. We spent a lot of time on recruiting, putting our heads together on what to teach and how to get people to come and take classes. First, we took the classes to them."

(Chuck Marsh)

*"Bruce Turner would hold
a class under a shade tree.
He took me to a class out in
Windblow that I swear was
in a tobacco barn."*

(Ted Blake)

*"Yep. Sure was. If you have just
a couple of people interested in
learning how to do something,
you have to find a place
near them where they are
comfortable. They will build
the class from there."*

(Bruce Turner)



*"I saw that a perfect environment in the
beginning is not necessary. You can have
school anywhere. All you need is those who
want to learn and someone to teach. That
had served a good purpose. It introduced
the county residents to MTI, let them know
the school was responsive to whatever they
wanted to learn, and would meet their
needs. Everyone became interested under
an umbrella of collective ownership. It
was the county's school and we were there
to teach and train."*

(Ted Blake)



*"We were pretty much isolated back then.
NC 134 had not been built and US 220 was a
heavily traveled two-lane highway. I don't think
many people made that drive every day. A local
college made all the difference."*

*(Ronnie Dyer,
Criminal Justice graduate,
Class of 1978)*



"You have to take the class to the people, right in their own neighborhood, before they believe that what they are doing has value. Montgomery County has always been rich in folk art, just full of creative, artistic people."

(Bruce Turner)

ABOVE: Mrs. Betty Thompson and her crocheting class at Pekin Community Center, a small building warmed by a wood heater.

BELOW: Bruce Turner helps a resident of Evans Rest Home in Star remove a fish hook from her sweater on an outing.



"We learned to do whatever needed to be done. We all worked and stayed together. We put our lives into the school. With all the obstacles it faced, it is amazing the school made it 50 years."

(Phil Kissell)



MTI Foundation

TAKING EDUCATION TO THE COMMUNITY ALSO MEANT providing a means for students to pay college expenses. Chartered February 10, 1977 as a non-profit organization, the MTI Foundation was established to enable everyone to further his/her education by means of scholarships and grants. The funds donated remained permanent (endowed) and only interest from the funds would be used for scholarships and grants.

The foundation became dormant over time and was reactivated in 1992 with the appointment of Bruce Turner as director. Over the next two years the foundation secured board members, incorporated as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and had receipts totaling \$11,783.

In February 1995, the foundation's Board of Directors began working on a "21st Century Endowment" campaign, setting out to raise \$500,000. By October 1997 the goal was reached. Directors selected an investment firm for the funds, and the first scholarships were awarded in 1997.



TOP: "Discussing future plans for the MTI Foundation are, from left, Francis W. McCallum, by-laws committee chairman; Robert Liles, Jr., chairman; and Marvin G. Miles, President of Montgomery Technical Institute." (Montgomery Herald, May 11, 1978)

BOTTOM: "Montgomery Community College's Board of Trustees' Chairman Lennie T. James receives a \$3,000 endowment for the Betty M. Reynolds Scholarship. Left to right, Bruce Turner, MCC Interim President, James, Betty M. Reynolds; and Bill Hodges and Joel M. Powers, Centel Pioneers officials." (Montgomery Herald, December 16, 1992)



The Annex

CLASSES MOVED TO THE ANNEX before renovations were complete, so employees did some of the work on the building to make it habitable:

"We fired the boiler, laid tile, did whatever we had to. The building had a tarred roof that leaked. One of the trustees, John Kern, was a building contractor and he furnished the tar and the tar machine at wholesale. The employees carried the tar to the roof in buckets and mopped it on."

(Bruce Turner)



In June 1970, MTI was approved to renovate the old Ford dealership building on South Main Street in Troy. It became known as “The Annex” and housed continuing education programs in textiles, upholstery, carpentry, ceramics, and auto mechanics.

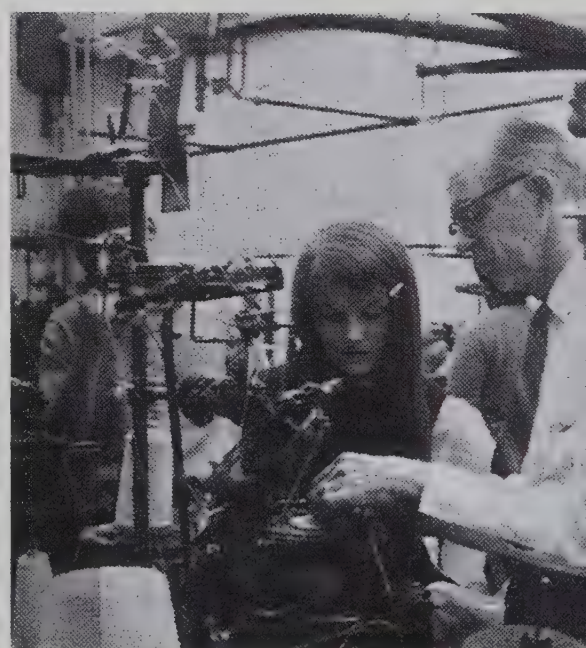
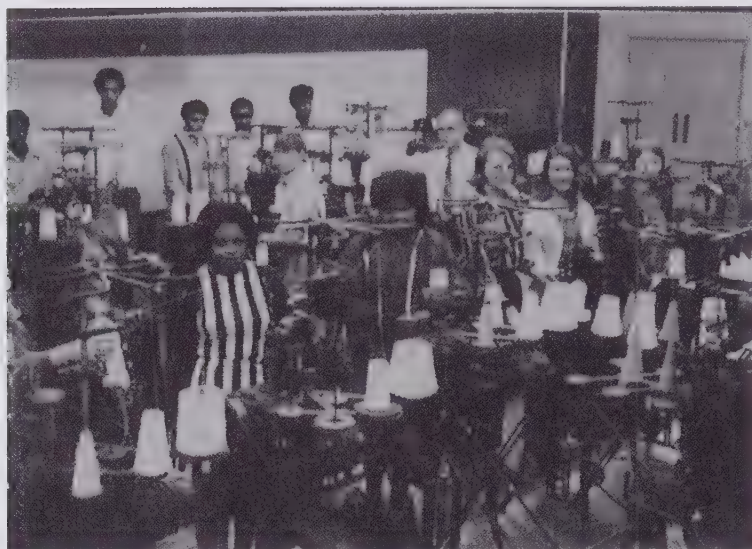


The Ford Dealership, or “Annex,” circa 1970.

Pilot Textile Mill

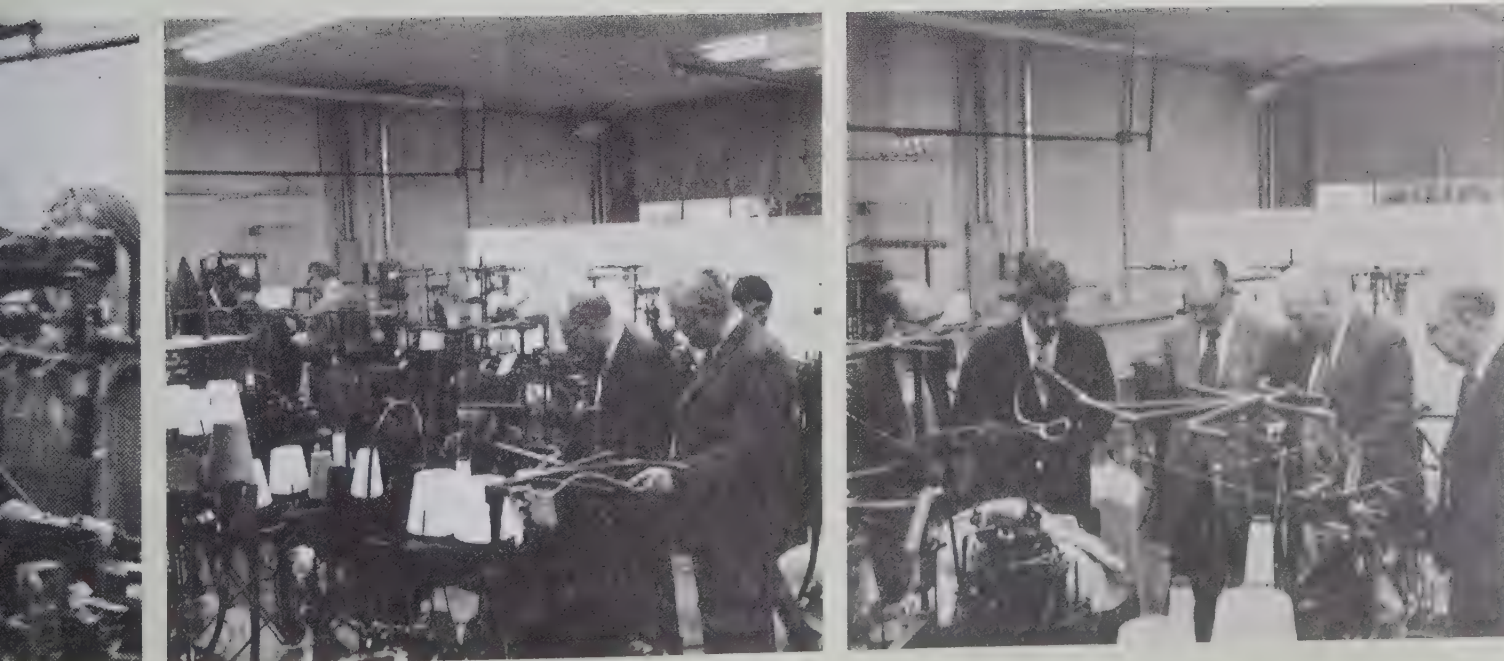
"At that time Montgomery County produced half the socks sold in the US. The immediate impact (MTI had) on employment was in the knitting industry, training knitting machine fixers. Several industries put knitting machines in the Annex for training and fixers had no problem getting jobs."

(Jesse Capel)



LEFT: textile machinery. RIGHT: East Montgomery High School student shown receiving instruction in textiles from Clarence Boylin.

OPPOSITE PAGE: East (top left) and West (bottom left) Montgomery juniors and seniors enrolled in textile curriculum are pictured at the Pilot Textile Mill. **BELOW:** Students inspecting machinery.



Officials inspect machinery at the Annex's "Pilot Textile Mill." **LEFT:** Howard Dorsett (chairman County Board of Education) and John Russell (hosiery manufacturing executive) inspect a knitting machine operated by a student. **RIGHT PHOTO,** left to right: Clarence Boylen, MTI instructor; Jesse Capel and Fred Taylor, MTI Trustees; John Russell, and Howard Dorsett. Photos from Montgomery Herald, 1970.

Ceramics & Pottery



"The Annex was old and the roof leaked. When it rained, students put boards on the floor to walk on. We were all young. The students were dedicated, and we were very careful about firing the electric kilns with water running under the boards under our feet. Young and foolish . . ."

*(Mike Ferree,
Pottery Instructor,
1973–2013)*

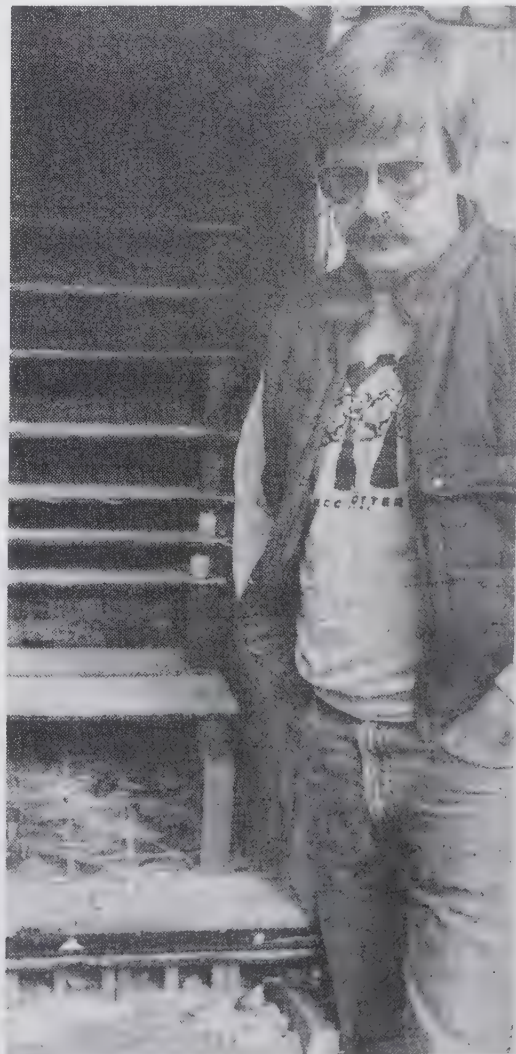
"The pottery program started in the Annex. The building was old and dilapidated, but MTI had more and better equipment than the ceramics department (at my) graduate school."

(Mike Ferree)

POTTERY PRODUCTION WAS ADDED IN JUNE 1972, a craft indigenous to the area. Pottery making at Montgomery Technical Institute was unique to the community colleges along the eastern seaboard. First instructors were Ted and Esther Whaley.

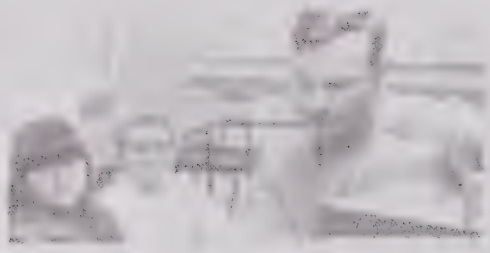
The first curriculum pottery instructor, Zedith Teague Garner, was a 4th generation potter from Robbins, whose pottery-making heritage went back to the mid-1700s. From 1973-2013, instructor Mike Ferree built the pottery program and rebuilt the industry in the Seagrove area.





OPPOSITE PAGE, top: Evening Ceramics class, circa 1970. Middle: Ceramics artistic display. Bottom: 20-piece Nativity scene created by ceramics class and given to Allen's Rest Home of Star for Christmas 1970. **THIS PAGE**, clockwise from top: various work by area artists circa 1972; Mike Ferree, long-time pottery instructor; Zedith Teague Garner, first pottery instructor.

On Being Small



"As a small institution, MTI needed to think differently from the technical colleges in places with larger populations and more resources.

Everything had to be done right. The programs had to be right, and when it was done right, you had to let it grow, and they did grow. There was always a struggle to get what we needed. There will always be limits and you have to wait. We had our frustrations, but we all kept working together. We all had the same goal. Whatever we did, we did well."

(Ted Blake)

"Equipping labs and workshops requires a major capital investment. It was difficult to make ends meet because we did not go outside the county to recruit people. We really did have a philosophy that the school was for Montgomery County."

(David Bland)



"When we were trying to get equipment and get organized, students would get frustrated and discouraged. Bruce (Turner) would show up with a pep talk, let them know what the administration was doing to get us what we needed and encourage them to stick with us. They did, and they built a lot of things we needed to get started. One of the first students was Jim Mundy, a pipefitter by trade, was a very good welder and did a lot of work for us."

*(Gene Anderson,
first Gunsmithing instructor,
1978–2001)*

An early member of the Board of Trustees tells a story about a power bill that the college did not have the funds to pay. "We passed around the hat at a board meeting to collect enough money to pay the bill that month."

(Anonymous)



"Because of our size, our budget was always tight. In those early years it was about \$18-\$20K. The rest we went around and raised. Our instructors and students did the work on the buildings. At Page Street we didn't have a library so we asked the county to close in the porch and we'd finish it ourselves and that would be the library. We did wiring and painting at night and on weekends. Everyone pitched in."

(Ron Kincaid)

"Two men who were influential in getting the school established within the community were Eddie Coleman and Howard Dorsett. Mr. Coleman was a teacher and an advocate of education, especially for the African-American population. He was a gentleman of few words, but when he spoke, he cut to the heart of the matter. He was very powerful and an early trustee of the school. Mr. Dorsett was chairman of the Board of Education. These two men, more than anybody else, were also responsible for the smooth integration of public schools in Montgomery County."

(Bruce Turner)



"We had day and night classes but we didn't have the resources to hire additional personnel, so we split shifts, worked day and night and did what we had to do for the students. Students are the backbone of the college. We cared about them, worked with them through academic, financial and personal issues. You don't survive unless you put the students first."

(Phil Kissell)



"The men and women in Montgomery County came to believe in Montgomery Technical Institute. In the community college system, the student is your boss. They are the taxpayers and if they don't see value in what you do, it won't happen. You have to move among the people. They are the power base."

(Bruce Turner)

"As all of us knew from the beginning, MTI would probably never be a large school, but the growth it has experienced during its short history has far exceeded even my expectations. In fact, according to the Statistical Division of the Department of Community Colleges, Montgomery County enrolled this year 132% of its potential. Such a record of growth speaks pointedly to the untiring efforts of the staff and faculty at MTI."

*(David Bland
as quoted in Montgomery
Herald, May 1971)*

OPPOSITE PAGE: Eddie B. Coleman.
CENTER PHOTO: Phil Kissell teaches.

Actual charter, July 1971

ON JUNE 3, 1971,
the State Board of
Education approved
Montgomery Technical
Institute as a Charter
Technical Institution,
effective July 1971. In
compliance with law,
four additional trustees were appointed
by the Governor. Responsibility for
local control of the college was given
to the Board of Trustees including the
President of the Student Government
Association, who serves as an ex-
officio member of the Board. The four

additional trustees appointed by Governor Robert Scott
were Edgar A. Anderson, Eleanor Chappell, Ann Kirk, and
Charles Bruton.

In July 1971 Montgomery Technical Institute changed
administrative leadership following the resignation of
President Bland, and the Board of Trustees approved Marvin
G. Miles as the new President effective that same August.



State Board of Education Raleigh, North Carolina

To Whomsoever These Presents May Come
Greetings: Know Ye That
Montgomery Technical Institute

Is Chartered

By authority of the General Assembly of the State
of North Carolina under the terms and provisions of
Article 115-A of the General Statutes of said State as
a public institution of the North Carolina Community
College System having been Originally established on
the 7th day of September in the year of 1967 as a
tax supported institution under the style and title of
Montgomery Technical Institute(Contract).

In Witness Whereof and Certification Thereto, we the
undersigned have subscribed our names this 1st day
of July Anno Domini 1971.



Ben E. Fountain Jr.
W. D. Lanning

Marvin G. Miles

2nd President of Montgomery Technical Institute
1971-1984

"Mr. Miles had the leadership qualities essential for a technical institute. He was a firm believer in technical education and took us through the construction of our campus and a time of tremendous growth."

(Jesse Capel)



**From: Beecher Island, CO
A.B. Catawba College
B.S. UNC Greensboro
M.A. Duke University**

"Montgomery Technical Institute offers you an opportunity to come to an institution with an unusual personality. We are large enough to be effective in our instructional programs and small enough to personalize. We do not believe bigger is necessarily better. We are committed to quality and education for the individual on an individual basis."

"Recruitment of students is the major order of business. We do not want to just fill classrooms, but we want to fill them with quality people who can take advantage of what we're offering. We're going to make every effort to make MTI meet the needs of the people of Montgomery County." (Marvin Miles, as quoted in the Montgomery Herald, July 1971)

Prior to his tenure as MTI president, Marvin Miles was the principal of Ansonville High School from 1955–1960, Rohanen High from 1960–1965, and Thomasville High School from 1965–1971. Miles, like Bland, was also a former Baptist minister.

A NEW HOME

"One day, Colonel Blair walked into Marvin Miles' office and said, 'I want to give you land to build a school.' It was an answer to prayers."

(Phil Kissell)

"He gave it (MTI) a home."

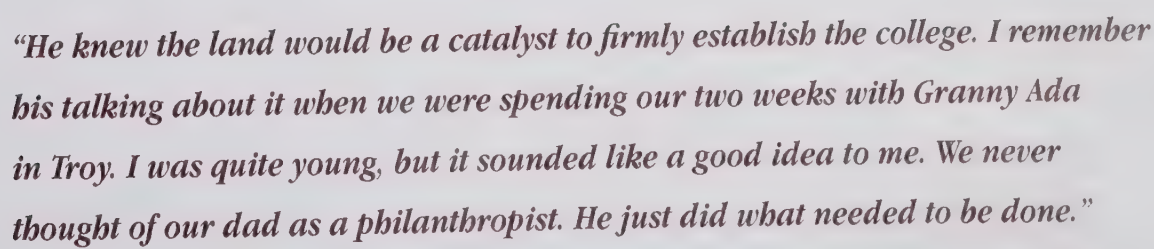
*(Claudia Bultbuis,
daughter of Col. Blair
and Current MCC
Chairman of the Board
of Trustees)*

Building 100

ACCORDING TO THE US FOREST SERVICE, Colonel Joseph Reese Blair traded two plots of timber land in the Badin Lake area that were surrounded by Uwharrie National Forest for the acreage on Page Street near Troy (see opposite page).

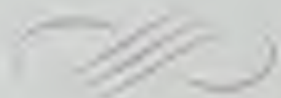
In August 1973 the State Board of Education approved the donation of 76 acres by the family of Colonel Joseph Reese Blair for a new Montgomery Technical Institute site.





15

The Bond Referendum



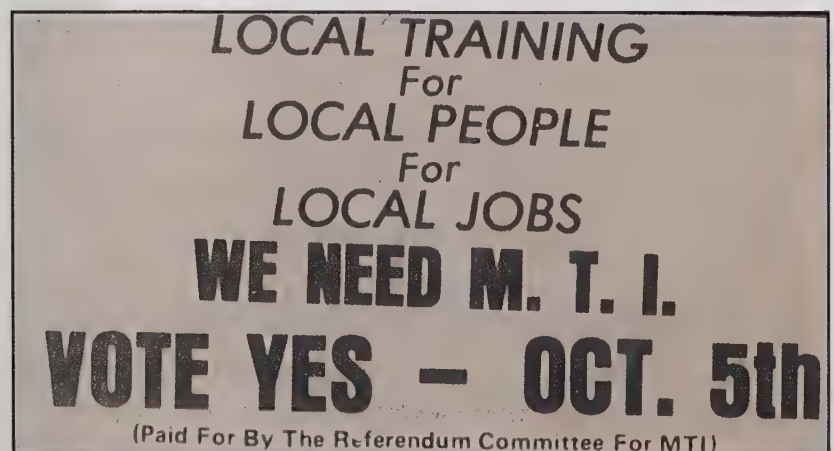
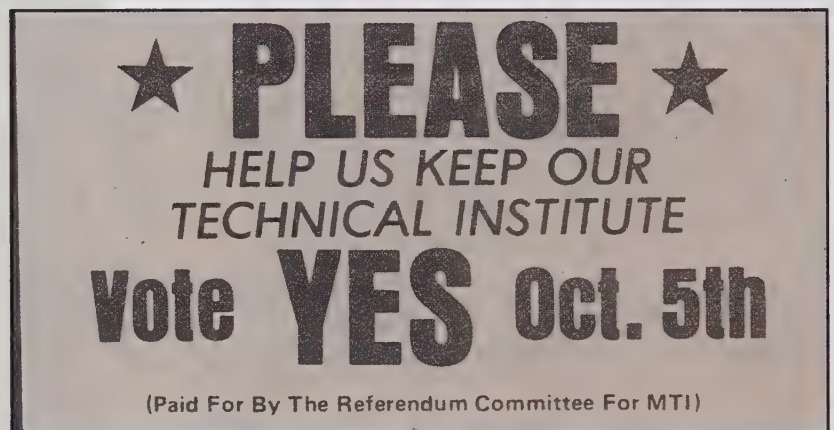
MTI WAS SEVEN YEARS OLD AND SCATTERED about in various places. The Blair family donated the land and now funds had to be raised to build a building. The county commissioners and MTI officials launched a \$975,000 bond referendum for October 5, 1974. In the middle of an economic downturn, every MTI employee took on the responsibility of gathering support for the school.

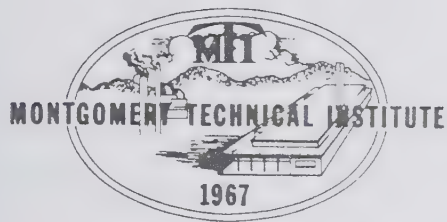
"The employees stepped up to canvass the county to get support for the bond. It was a nerve-wracking time, because if we were to survive, it had to pass."

(Phil Kissell)

"Passage looked bleak in a recession with mills closing, but every employee was out campaigning. Among others, I remember Sarah Carpenter was instrumental in getting out the vote. She was a strong advocate and believed in what we were doing."

(Ted Blake)





Your Technical Institute

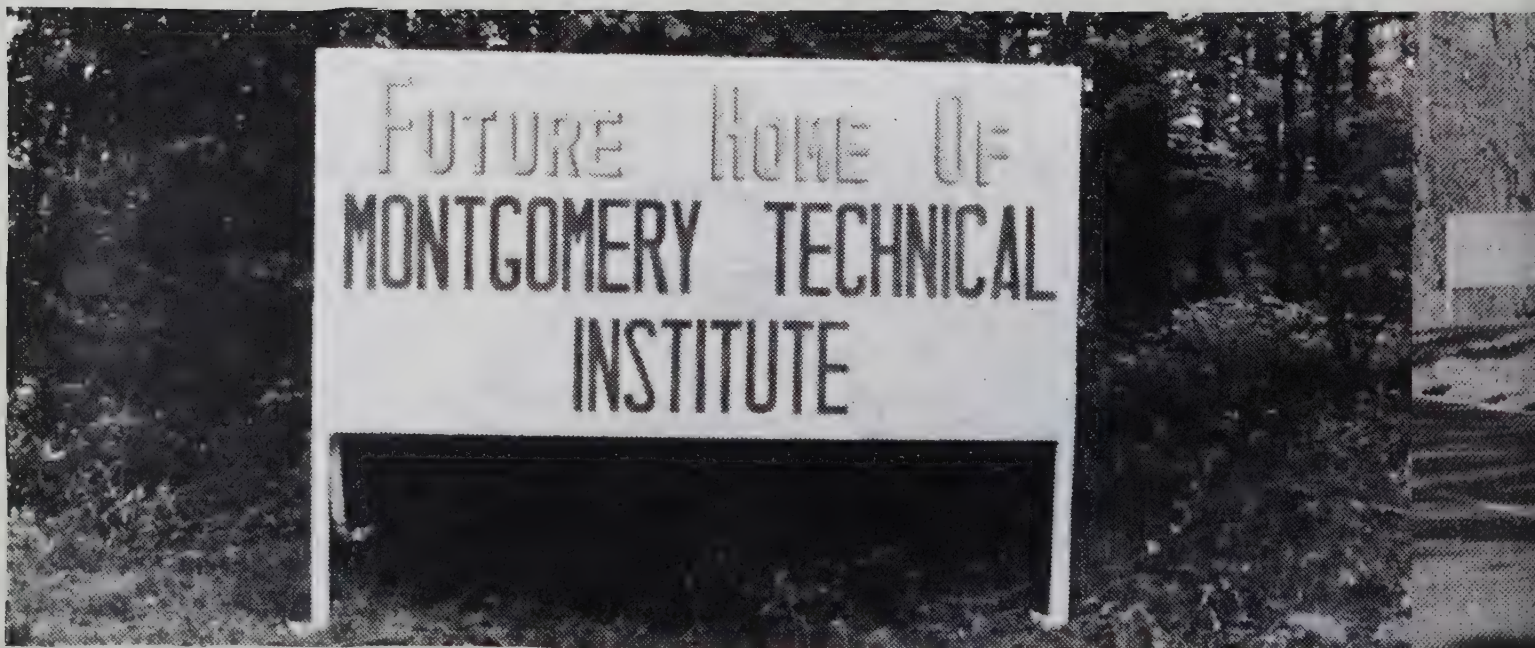
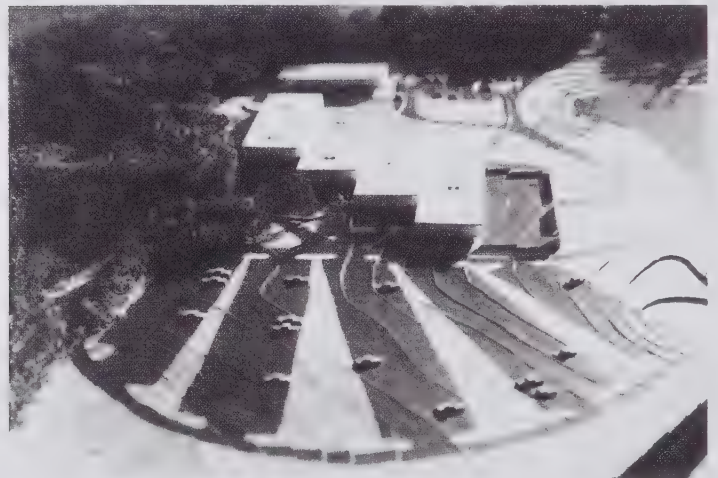
YOUR Decision

"The vote was held on a Saturday and passed by 61 votes. Ours was the only educational bond issue passed that year. J.E. Allen was instrumental in getting it passed. No one else could have done it. We were deeply grateful to the Blair family for donating the land for the college. Without it, we may not have passed the bond issue to build MCC's campus, starting with the first building that brought the curriculum programs under one roof."

(Jesse Capel)

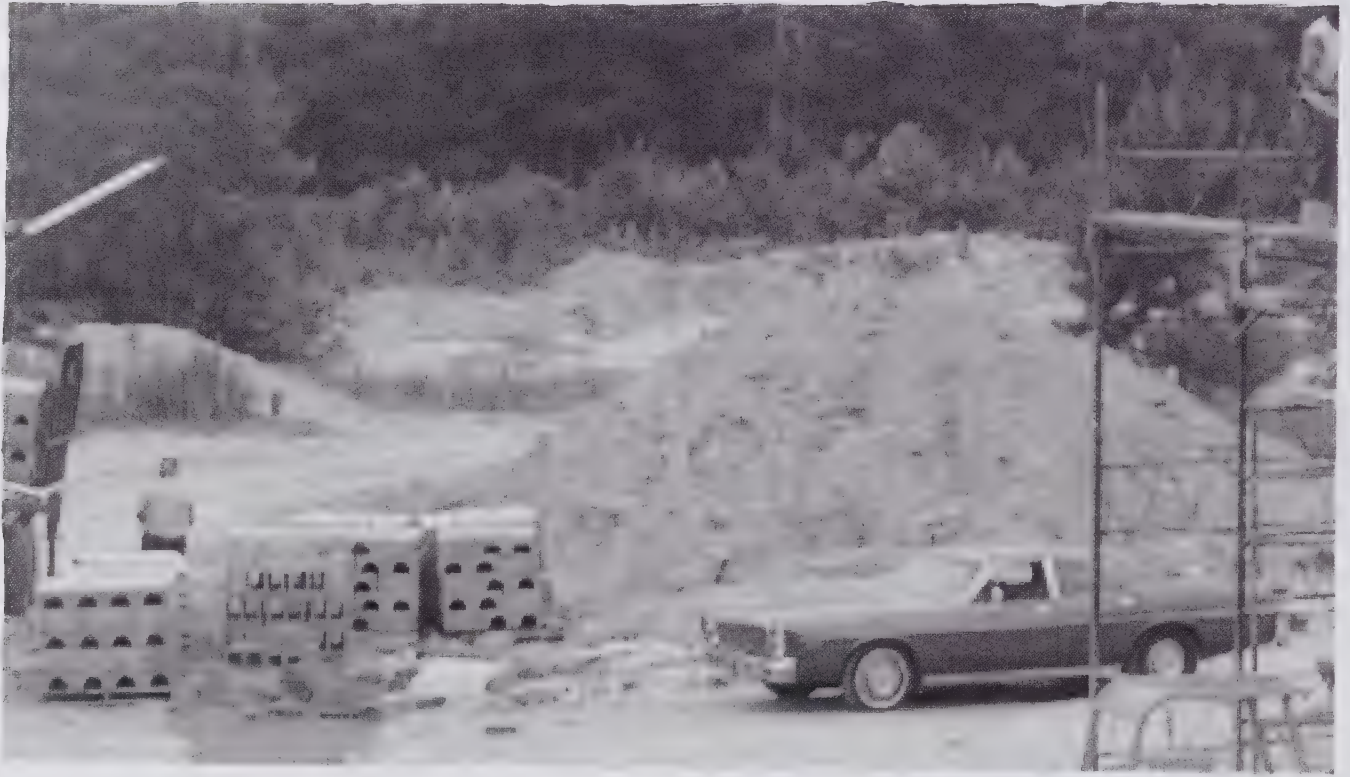
Construction

PLANS MOVED FORWARD AND THE building plans went through several revisions to keep the emphasis on vocational spaces. Construction was finally approved by the trustees in 1976. Trustee John Kern, who was a contractor, oversaw construction and employees were almost daily visitors to check on progress.



OPPOSITE PAGE, top: President Marvin Miles and Trustee/Chairman of Building Committee John Kern look over architectural plans for the new building. Bottom: model of proposed building. **BELOW**: Work in preparation for construction.





"When we got the new building, Mr. Miles would bring me and Willie Chambers out here to the building site. There would be stacks of brick sitting around the structure. They would have different colors of bricks on each pallet and we would take empty pallets and set them out and hand mix the different bricks. The price for the bricks premixed would have been very expensive, so we hand-mixed the colors for the bricklayers the next day. Each time a new shipment of bricks arrived, Mr. Miles would bring us back out to mix the bricks."

(Barney Greene)

"The school kept growing and eventually a new and bigger place was constructed. I think moving day was some time in 1977. Everybody had to work to get things done. I guess there was no money to pay movers. The men did the heavy lifting of equipment and furniture, while the women drove the trucks and moved supplies. On one trip a refrigerator fell off the truck, and it caused a slight delay while it was retrieved. We used anything that had wheels to move items. I don't know how many trips I made into the new building pushing a wheeled secretarial chair with books stacked on it. After a weekend of moving, some of the men said they were so dirty, they threw their clothes in the garbage instead of trying to clean them."

*(Doris Haywood,
Secretary to the Dean of
Instruction & Assistant to
the President, 1970–1985)*



Dedication

MTI WAS DEDICATED ON A SWELTERING Sunday afternoon on June 12, 1977. The ceremony was followed by a ribbon cutting and open house.

The 57,797 square foot building cost a total of \$1,627,399.

In the fall semester 1976, student enrollment was 335. In the fall semester 1977 student enrollment was 407, a 21.5% increase.



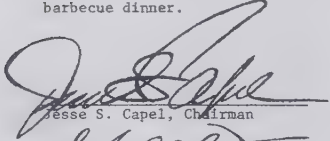
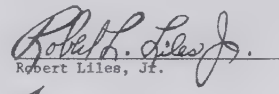
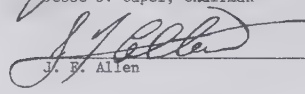
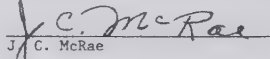
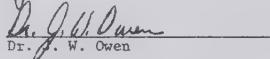
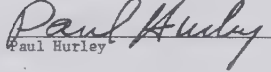
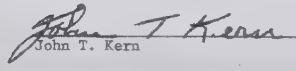
MONTGOMERY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE
P. O. Drawer 487
Troy, North Carolina 27371
May 19, 1977

TO FELLOW CITIZENS OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Please accept this as your personal invitation to the dedication of Montgomery Technical Institute on Sunday, June 12, 1977 at 4:00 p.m.

We are pleased that completion of your building affords greater career opportunities for all. We are looking forward to this dedication and continued service.

Following the dedication, you are invited to join us for a barbecue dinner.

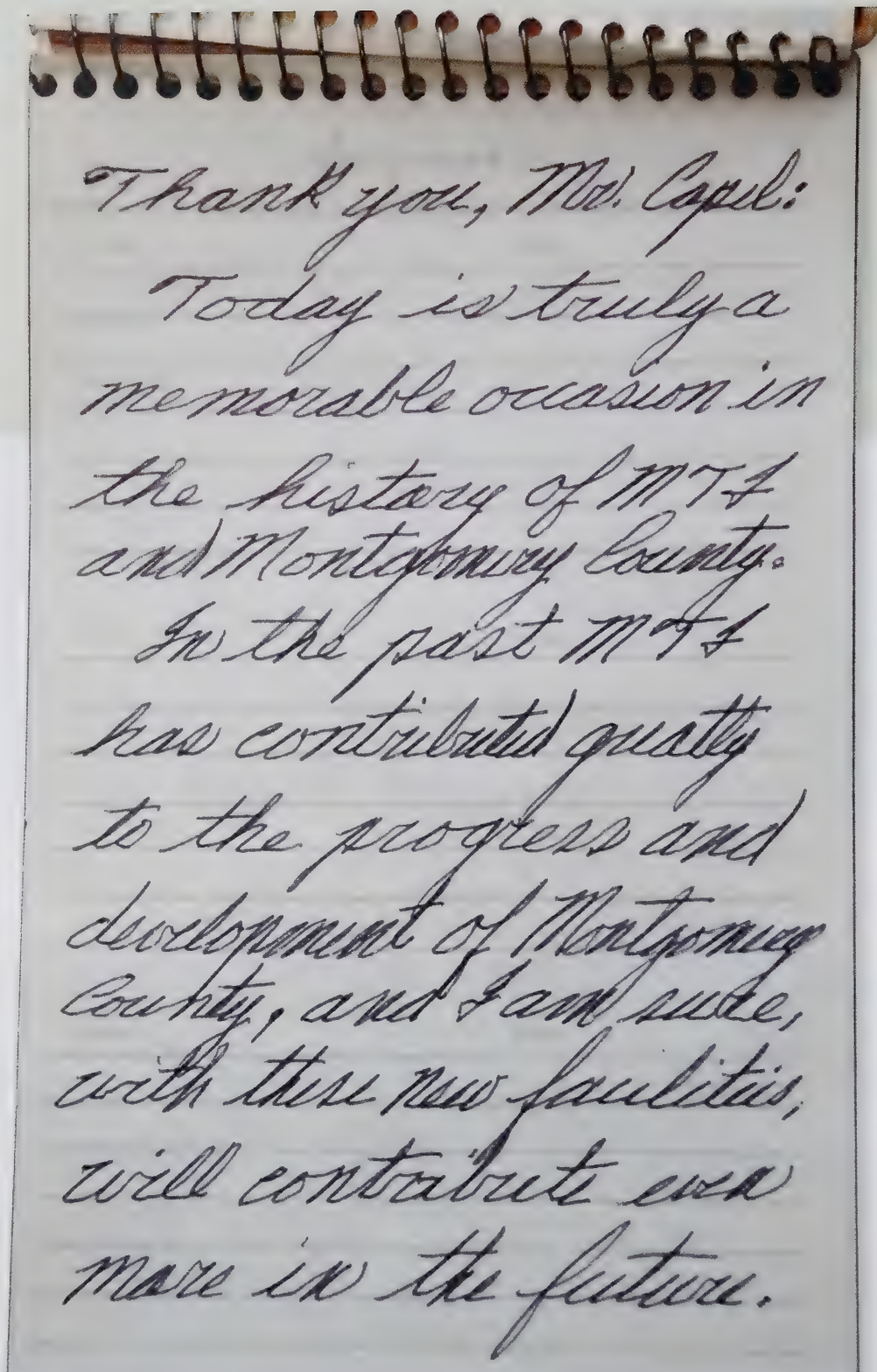
 Jesse S. Capel, Chairman	 Robert Liles, Jr.
 J. E. Allen	 Francis W. McCallum
 Mrs. Alleen W. Blackwell	 J. C. McRae
 Eddie B. Coleman	 Dr. J. W. Owen
 Paul Hurley	 Mrs. Anna B. Parker
 John T. Kern	 Fred Taylor, Sr.





OPPOSITE PAGE, top: Invitation to the dedication of Building 100, printed in the Montgomery Herald, 1977. **OPPOSITE PAGE**, bottom: Building 100. **THIS PAGE**, top: Colonel Blair accepts dedication plaque at Dedication Ceremony. **BELOW**: the audience.





Thank you, Mr. Capel:
Today is truly a
memorable occasion in
the history of MTI
and Montgomery County.
In the past MTI
has contributed greatly
to the progress and
development of Montgomery
County, and I am sure,
with these new facilities,
will contribute even
more in the future.

Colonel Blair's hand-written speech for the facility dedication:

"Thank you, Mr. Capel:

Today is truly a memorable occasion in the history of MTI and Montgomery County. In the past MTI has contributed greatly to the progress and development of Montgomery County, and I am sure, with these new facilities, will contribute even more in the future."

(Courtesy of Claudia Blair Bulhuis)

"I remember walking through the building with Bruce Turner and wondering how we would ever fill that much space. In two years, I was wondering where we were going to put all these students."

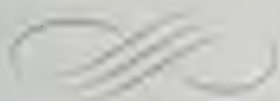
(Ted Blake)



"Students lounge in the library area of the new \$1,657,022 Montgomery Technical Institute building on some 76 acres of land donated by Col. Reese Blair of near Washington, D.C., a native of Troy." (Montgomery Herald)

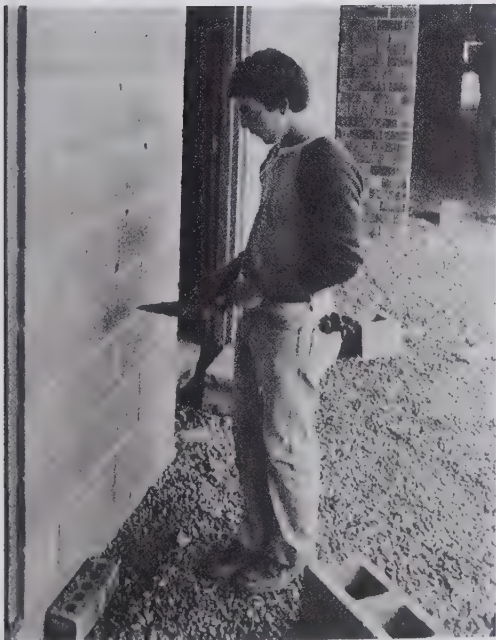


Expansion



TOP: "Work is underway on a major addition to Montgomery Technical Institute in Troy." (Montgomery Herald, 1981)
BOTTOM LEFT: "Jerry King puts finishing touches on masonry for a new addition to Montgomery Technical Institute in Troy." (Montgomery Herald, 1982) **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Building 100 after the completion of the addition.

IN 1981, 8,753 SQUARE FEET OF space was added for classrooms and labs, completed by Spring 1982, at a cost of around \$395,000.



IN 1983 MONTGOMERY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE became Montgomery Technical College and in 1984, President Benny B. Hampton was hired.

One of the first things Dr. Benny Hampton did after becoming president of MCC was to walk the property:



"I knew we had a large tract of land, but were using only about 25 acres. All of it had been clear-cut and the best investment would be timber. I talked with J.E Allen, who was Chairman of the Trustees, and Fred Taylor at Troy Lumber about the best way to do it. The problem was we didn't have the money. A few weeks later, out of the blue, I got a call from Monsanto Chemical Co. They were looking for about one hundred acres to plant to test a forest chemical product. I couldn't believe it! The NC and US forest services agreed to plant the loblolly pines in six tracts and the MCC trustees approved the project. The trees grew, Monsanto conducted its tests, moved on, and left the trees. It couldn't have worked out better. The tree farm became a living laboratory for the forestry program."

(Benny Hampton)

Dr. Benny B. Hampton

3rd President of Montgomery Technical College
1984-1992

Despite the changes, or perhaps because of them, Benny Hampton saw unprecedented growth at MTC during his 9-year tenure.



**From: Surry County, NC
B.S. NC State University
M.S. NC State University
Ed. D. NC State University**

When Dr. Benny Hampton took office on February 1, 1984, he knew major changes were coming:

The NC Department of Community Colleges established new uniform standards for all curriculum programs and mandated college degrees for all administrators and lead instructors. Community colleges were required to comply to the new standards within two years.

Textile mills were closing in the county which changed the focus of many vocational courses at the college.

Budgets (as always) were tight.

MTC got its first computers.

"We have to anticipate change all the time, but so many changes going on at once, especially computers, was overwhelming."

(Benny Hampton)



In 1987, through a partnership with Leon Neil from the NC Alternative Energy Corporation, MCC was able to build an industrial training facility for heat pump installation and repair. Working with manufacturers, Dr. Hampton got ten heat pumps donated from the top ten HVAC manufacturers for students to train on the different systems. During the

years that followed it was commonplace to see work trucks parked at the old Uwharrie Mountain Lodge where workers from outside Montgomery County would stay while taking the week-long training.

Also in 1987, Montgomery Technical College became Montgomery Community College as authorized by the North Carolina General Assembly. During Dr. Hampton's presidency, the college added two buildings and plans were in progress to add a third.

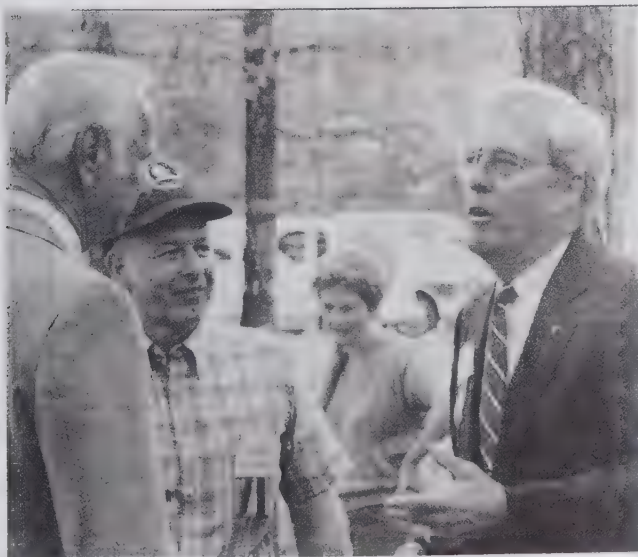
“We had people from every county in the state training at MCC. It was the greatest project we had directly involved with industry.”

(Benny Hampton)



"When I came to MTC in 1984, the staff gave me a welcome reception and my former secretary sent a gag-gift: an out-of-style blonde wig. She loved wigs. We kidded her about wigs and she kidded me about being bald. The reception was in early February and I remember saying that I would wear the wig to school on the first day the temperature dropped below zero I thought that was a safe bet that late in the winter. But lo and behold the temperature plummeted early in March to below zero. I showed up to work wearing my blonde wig hat."

(Benny Hampton)



OPPOSITE PAGE: Construction of Building 500, also known as the Heat Pump Skills Center. **ABOVE:** "Dr. Benny Hampton . . . models the sports jacket that was a surprise gift from the faculty and staff." (Montgomery Herald, 1984) **LEFT:** Eben Wallace (left) and MTC President Benny Hampton (middle) talk with Lt. Governor Bob Jordan.

ON OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

MONTGOMERY TECHNICAL INSTITUTE SEEMED always to be on the cutting edge of the new, the unique, and the untested. It was almost as if someone said, "Let them try it at MTI first and see if it works." In truth, the college hired innovative, visionary people who overcame obstacles such as bureaucracy and budgets, and who were not afraid to work hard for what they believed in.

For example, Criminal Justice instructor Bob Qualls whose innovations were consistently adopted by the state's Law Enforcement Training and Standards Commission, had to battle the Commission to maintain the college's right to continue doing its own training:



Bob Qualls in class



Criminal Justice graduates at Montgomery Technical Institute circa 1981. Front row, far left: Bob Qualls. Also pictured is Eben Wallace (front center), then-sheriff of Montgomery County, and Wayne Wooten, Biscoe Chief of Police (far right).

"The Training and Standards Commission was going to take Basic Law Enforcement Training out of the hands of the smaller colleges and create five regional training centers. Whenever they tried to implement something that would not go over well for a smaller college like ours, I always fought against it. Ted Blake wrote letters to the other community colleges and they showed up at a standing-room-only meeting with the State Attorney General and a panel of supporters. Eben Wallace (Montgomery County Sheriff) came to support MTI. Eben smoked a pipe and whenever he got upset, his pipe shook. The High Point Police Chief was on the panel and was taking questions from the audience when Eben's pipe began to shake. All of a sudden he stood up and politely told the Chief of Police where he could go, then said, 'If you're having problems and you can't deliver, send your officers down to MTI and we'll take care of your situation for you.' Then he got up and walked out with me behind him. By the time we got to the lobby, the meeting broke up. By the time we got back to the sheriff's department, the news media were there with their cameras and microphones. And that was the end of that battle."

(Bob Qualls)



Benny Hampton and Emily Smith, Administrative Assistant to the President.

Sometimes the obstacles to overcome came in the form of a learning curve:

"MTC got its first computer in the Business office where, fortunately, Anne Tarlton spoke its language."

(Benny Hampton)

"A salesman came to teach us how to use the new automated accounting system. It was really a huge typewriter. The next day was payday and Virginia Jones had the payroll all figured up and gave it to me to type into the huge machine. So I sat down and started to work. About the third or fourth check it started typing all by itself. It messed up the check it was typing which was for several thousand dollars. Of course, it was my paycheck. Too bad I didn't get to keep it."

(Peggy Brewer)



Anne Tarlton with MTI's first automated accounting system.



"During the early years, the employees who used the computers at the college knew very little about how they worked other than how to operate them. I used to be very conscientious about turning computers off during rough weather. One afternoon there was a severe thunderstorm warning so I sent a message through the network to all the computer stations telling employees to shut their computers down because a storm was approaching. Virginia Gentry was working in Student Services at the time. When the message I sent came across her computer screen she exclaimed, 'Look at that! This thing is so smart it knows a storm is coming!'"

(Anne Tarlton)

MCC was a small college with a small budget. It was difficult providing the same benefits and services the larger colleges did. However, it didn't stop administrators from figuring out a way to do it anyway:

"Bill Price, Talbert Myers and I were at a SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools) meeting in Atlanta. While we were there we met the SACS vice president of curriculum. At the time, we were seeking a one-year college transfer program. The rule was that only two-year programs could transfer. During a really long and boring business session, we all slipped out a back door and who should slip out at the same time but the SACS VP. So we explained our small college situation to him. He understood our need and said he would support our request. And that's how we negotiated the one-year college transfer agreement."

(Phil Kissell)

Being a small college with a small budget also led to some creative methods for procuring necessary equipment:

"MTI was one of the smallest technical colleges in the state and the budget was always tight. So I was always on the lookout for deals on equipment. Gene Anderson (Gunsmithing instructor) had great contacts and he learned about some surplus equipment available for loan to schools through the Department of Defense. They would ship it free of charge but the warehouse was in Mechanicsburg, PA and Gene wanted to see the equipment first. Ted Blake was a pilot and borrowed a plane and the three of us flew to Pennsylvania. Gene picked out a couple of lathes and a milling machine and we came home. Nobody ever said, 'you can't do that.' We just got it done whatever way we could."

(Barney Greene)



Gene Anderson (right) on lathe

"We were small, so we had to do everything right. There was no room for error. We got into a situation with the federal financial aid office in Washington DC. We easily resolved it on the phone, but then the director proceeded to tell me how to run a college. I got irate and told her we were doing just fine, thank you. Our financial aid director at that time wasn't happy about that and told me my remark had probably just got her a federal audit. It did. The auditor went through every nook and cranny of financial aid and everything was fine."

(Phil Kissell)



Beth Smith and Phil Kissell

The Pottery Building



IN JANUARY 1990 THE COUNTY allocated \$25,000 for a new pottery building. MCC's maintenance department completed a lot of work on the building to lower costs. By September that same year, the pottery building opened to students for the fall quarter.

In 1992, MCC was allocated funds to build a new Business, Industry, Technology, Resource Center (BITRC). Preliminary plans for capital projects had to be submitted to the state within three days, so Dr. Benny Hampton stayed up all night, drawing the building MCC needed. The BITRC would not be completed until 1998, but Dr. Hampton's foresight and ability to respond to the needs of the county and the college resulted in unprecedented growth for MCC.





Pottery Building

THE BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE CENTER (BITRC)

WHEN DR. BENNY HAMPTON LEFT MONTGOMERY Community College in May 1992, Bruce Turner served as interim president. In March 1993, Dr. Theodore Gasper was hired as the fourth president at Montgomery Community College.

During his tenure at MCC, Dr. Gasper helped to integrate technology on campus and into the classroom. The North Carolina Information Highway was brought to MCC which laid the foundation for distance learning.

A bond approval during his appointment resulted in the construction of the Business, Industry, Technology, Resource Center which included an electronic library, multimedia classrooms, and a large indoor training facility/meeting room. The building was completed in 1998. The first graduation ceremony was held that May in the Multipurpose Room. Walls were removed between the classrooms and nine interactive video screens (one from each classroom) displayed a live video feed of the event to a standing-room-only audience.

*"He was one of the most brilliant people I ever met,
very creative: there was a measure of genius to him."*

*(Dale McInnis,
VP Administrative Services,
1992–2001)*

Dr. Theodore "Ted" Gasper

4th President of Montgomery Community College
1993–1998



From: Florence, SC
B.A. Dakota State College
M.S. South Dakota State University
Ed. D. University of Kentucky

During his tenure at MCC, Dr. Gasper helped to integrate technology on campus and into the classroom. The North Carolina Information Highway was brought to MCC which laid the foundation for distance learning. After five years of service, Dr. Gasper left MCC to take a position as president of Halifax Community College in July 1998.

Construction

IN 1992, LOCAL CITIZENS AND North Carolina voters approved, through a bond referendum, \$2.6 million in matching funds to finance a Business, Industry, Technology Resource Center (BITRC) and the Montgomery County School Board voted in 1994 to transfer approximately four acres of land to the college to be used for the facility.

THIS PAGE: from the Montgomery Herald, "A backhoe is shown initiating removal of asphalt along the main entrance drive to Montgomery Community College, preparing the way for bulldozers to level the site for construction of MCC's new Business-Industry-Technology Resource Center." **OPPOSITE PAGE,** clockwise from top: construction; students eating on picnic tables beside site; the BITRC building plaque.



"I would walk around the building every day to see how construction was going. After passing a wall at the back of the building several days in a row I noticed something strange about it. It just didn't look right. The higher it got, the more noticeable it became. Finally, Steve Hamilton (maintenance supervisor) and I pulled out a tape measure and discovered the wall wasn't plumb. The contractor ended up having to tear the wall down and start over."

(Barney Greene)

"I remember the crew digging the foundation uncovered a headstone from a grave. That stopped all work while they searched for a cemetery. It turns out they found nothing and decided that the headstone had just been thrown away."

(Dale McInnis)



Technology



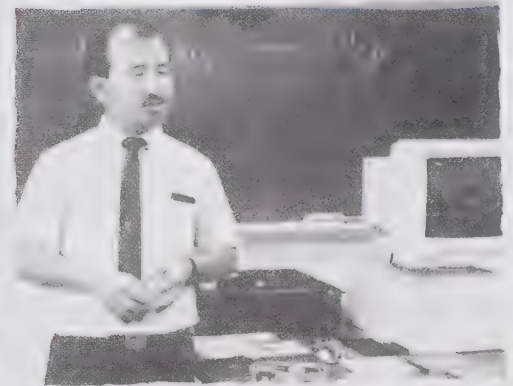
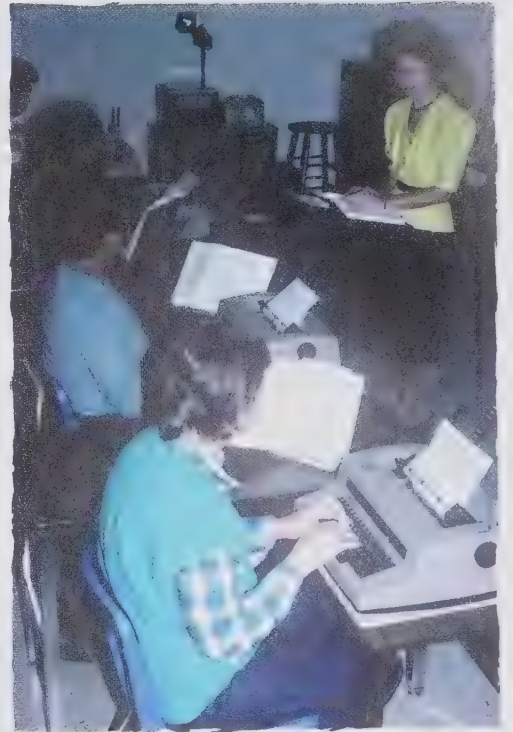
OPPOSITE PAGE, clockwise from top: An early computer classroom; Judy Miller teaches typing; technology instructor Teng Vang; first MCC graduating class to stand on the BITRC Building steps; another example of an early computer classroom. **BELOW**: First graduation held in the Multipurpose Room.

WHILE THE BUILDING WAS CONSTRUCTED, and during the years that followed, technology would have a tremendous impact on programs and course delivery. The new building would contain nine fully-integrated multimedia classrooms with

video, audio, and internet capabilities, four computer labs, and an internet protocol video room that would eventually replace the Information Highway.

The first graduation to be held on MCC's campus was in 1998 in the new Multipurpose Room. Moveable walls were opened to create arena-style seating and live video of the event was broadcast on screens around the room.





Dr. Mary Kirk



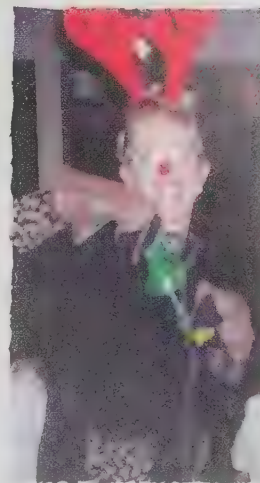
"Dr. Kirk was a students' president. She would hunt deer with students, she would participate in the forestry competitions, she supported students at the SGA conferences, took numerous pies in the face at Spring Flings over the years, and attended every SHOT Show with the Gunsmithing students. She was literally everywhere working for and supporting MCC."

*(Kathy Harris,
VP Student Services,
1979—2010)*



"During my second week as president the student government association was holding their annual Spring Fling. They had a 'Kiss a Pig' fundraiser where they put out several jars with names of college administrators or instructors on them. People would put money in the jars and the person who ended up with the most money in their jar had to kiss a pig. The trustee board had deep pockets and filled up my jar. It was a cute little piglet. I have kissed worse."

(Mary Kirk)



Dr. Mary P. Kirk

5th President of Montgomery Community College
1999-2014



From: Beaufort, NC

B.S. University of NC at Greensboro

M.A. East Carolina University

Ed.D. NC State University

Mary Kirk served Montgomery Community College for 15 years, the longest presidential tenure to date.

"Mary Kirk came in like a fresh breeze. Her professional attitude, her upbeat, gregarious nature and genuine love for community colleges was exactly what we needed."

(Ted Blake)

Perhaps Mary Kirk's greatest legacy to Montgomery Community College was her ability to raise funds.

"She never knew a stranger, ever. I could take her with me places and she was always shaking hands. People always wanted to give us stuff when she was around. She really had the respect of the top people in the gunsmithing industry. Over the course of her presidency, she got us probably \$600,000 to three-quarters of a million dollars for the Gunsmithing program."

*(Wayne Bernauer,
Gunsmithing instructor,
1985–2015)*



ABOVE: Dr. Kirk with Maintenance Supervisor Steve Hamilton; and giving Phil Kissell a pie in the face for the benefit of the nursing program.
LEFT: Dr. Kirk and Kiera Deschamps.



ABOVE: Dr. Kirk and Gelynda Capel presenting diplomas; Dr. Kirk causing trouble in the President's office; and Dr. Kirk's directory photo. **RIGHT:** the President's bike parked in its space.

There were 16 existing scholarships in the Foundation's endowment totaling \$232,693.37 when Mary Kirk was hired in 1999.

With the Foundation Director, Mary Kirk instituted the first regular fundraising activities to ensure the continued growth of the endowment fund.

1999—First Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser

2003—First Annual Fund Drive

2003—First Annual Raffle Fundraiser

When Dr. Kirk left in 2014, the Foundation's endowment had assets of over \$2.9 million with 75 fully-endowed and 26 named scholarships. The foundation awarded \$45,729 in scholarships in the 2013-14 academic year.



SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

Despite its size, or perhaps because of it, Montgomery Community College was a pioneer for programs such as Emergency Medical Technology, Criminal Justice and Basic Law Enforcement.

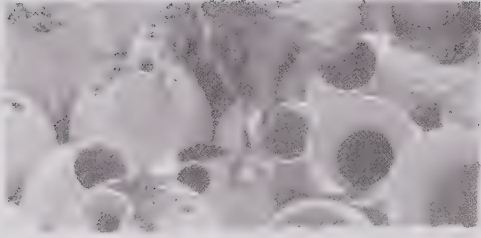
"We were in the right place at the right time. You hear it all the time but the whole time I was here, everyone's philosophy was, 'You know what you're doing, you know how to do it, take care of your program.' They didn't butt heads or drag things out. We were little. When you came up with an idea, you could try it. It was one of the good things about being at a small school. There wasn't a lot of bureaucracy."

(Bob Qualls)

This meant that the tiny technical institute initiated programs and curricula that had seldom, if ever, been tried before. So when someone said, “Let’s start a Pottery program,” (or a Gunsmithing program, or Taxidermy, or Forestry), there were a few batted eyelids, but the answer was always, “OK. How do we do that?”

While every program has shaped MCC and made it what it is today, four programs have deep roots in the culture of Montgomery County, have defined Montgomery Community College over the years, and have put Montgomery County, NC on the map. The following four programs stand out as giving Montgomery Community College its unique identity.





Pottery

A local potter, Zedith Teague Garner from Robbins, was hired to teach the new Pottery Production program for MTI in 1972. Teague's pottery-making heritage went back to the mid-1700s. She worked with her father at Teague's Pottery in Robbins. Pottery classes were started in the Annex building. One year later, a young artist named Mike Ferree came to MTI with a love of clay forms and a Master in Fine Arts degree. For the next 40 years, Mike would build the Pottery program and bring international attention to it.

"Production pottery was not taught anywhere else in the country at that time and we got students from all over the US."

(Mike Ferree)





"Learning production pottery was a good basic education for students and it met the needs of the established potters, who hired many of them as apprentices. A lot of our students went to work as interns for the established potteries. In the 1970s and 80s, we went to shows every other weekend from Tennessee to Florida to promote the program and put MTI on the map."

(Mike Ferree)

Over the years, many students opened their own studios and earned fame as potters in the art world.

"Among my classmates were Mack Chriscoe (Chriscoe's Pottery), Millie McCanless (Dover Pottery), Fred Beane (Old House Pottery), David Garner (Turn and Burn Pottery), and Brad Tucker (Cedar Creek Gallery). Three of us opened potteries in 1982 to make a total of 12 shops in Seagrove."

*(Meredith Heywood,
Pottery class of 1982,
Whynot Pottery)*



MCC gave individual potters the training and direction to go out on their own.

"We learned all aspects of the business and Mike stressed and demonstrated the work ethic that would be necessary to be successful. "

*(Regina Voncannon,
Pottery class of 1989,
Pottery Junction)*



"The pottery program, which is dedicated to a material and a process is the best-kept secret in the clay world. The word of mouth (advertising) and work by the students built an international reputation."

*(David Garner,
Pottery class of 1982,
Turn & Burn Pottery)*



"People enjoy the art and craft of pottery and appreciate its history. MCC graduates revived that interest and gave us the opportunity to build a museum to document that we are the history pottery center in North Carolina."

*(Phil Morgan,
Pottery class of 1976,
Phil Morgan Pottery)*

“Mike also brought a sense of design. I never picked up a paintbrush in my life and he pushed us to explore design, not just function.”

(Meredith Heywood)



In 2006 Discovery Place commissioned eight 6-ft replicas of the pottery jars that held the Dead Sea Scrolls for an exhibition of those documents. Along with the large pots, they also created 149 smaller vessels of varying sizes for the display.

During his 40-year career, Mike Ferree won numerous awards and accolades. In 2000, he was presented The Order of the Longleaf Pine by Governor Jim Hunt. Upon his retirement in 2013, the MCC Board of Trustees honored him with a rare Resolution of Commendation that recounted his contributions to the college and professional crafts. The program is now operating under the Heritage Crafts umbrella of the Continuing Education department and is taught by Josh Floyd.



Gunsmithing/ Metal Engraving



BRUCE TURNER WAS THE FIRST TO MENTION gunsmithing and led the slow process of building support among professional gunmakers and firearms organizations. The class was several years in the making, starting with a continuing education class on black powder rifles.

The momentum grew. Ted Blake took the application to the president of the community college system, Larry Blake, who saw the preparation that had gone into the application and recommended approval. Other opposition was quietly confronted and overcome by Turner and the Gunsmithing Advisory Committee.

*"Three factors made the
gunsmithing program a reality:
I listened to Bruce Turner, got
approval from the state, and
hired Gene Anderson."*

(Ted Blake)

OPPOSITE PAGE: Gene Anderson (left) instructing a student. **PAGES 88-89:**

Picture 1-Wayne Bernauer (right) and Jesse Houser (left) with Hank Williams, Jr.; **Picture 2-** from left to right, Walt Heim, Wayne Bernauer, and Gene Anderson; **Picture 3-**Jesse Houser (left); **Picture 4-**Wayne Bernauer; **Picture 5-**Gene Anderson (right); **Picture 6-**Jesse Houser; **Picture 7-**Wayne Bernauer



"We had no clue in the world where to find an instructor. Doris Haywood suggested talking to her brother, Jack McIntyre, who had been to Pennsylvania Gunsmith School. McIntyre recommended Gene Anderson. It took some convincing to get Gene to move here and start our school, but like everything good, the program started small and grew. Now, it is one of the top schools in the country and has brought national attention to MCC."

(Ted Blake)

"Gene was instantly liked by the whole crew. We felt like he was the man to make gunsmithing successful. Talking to him, we knew he wasn't in it for himself. He wanted to see his students become successful. That was always his reward."

(Bruce Turner)

"Classes started in September and there was no way to be ready. We had no equipment whatsoever."

(Bruce Turner)



"That was an understatement. When I saw the classroom, all it had was twelve red bench vices on a long workbench."

(Gene Anderson)

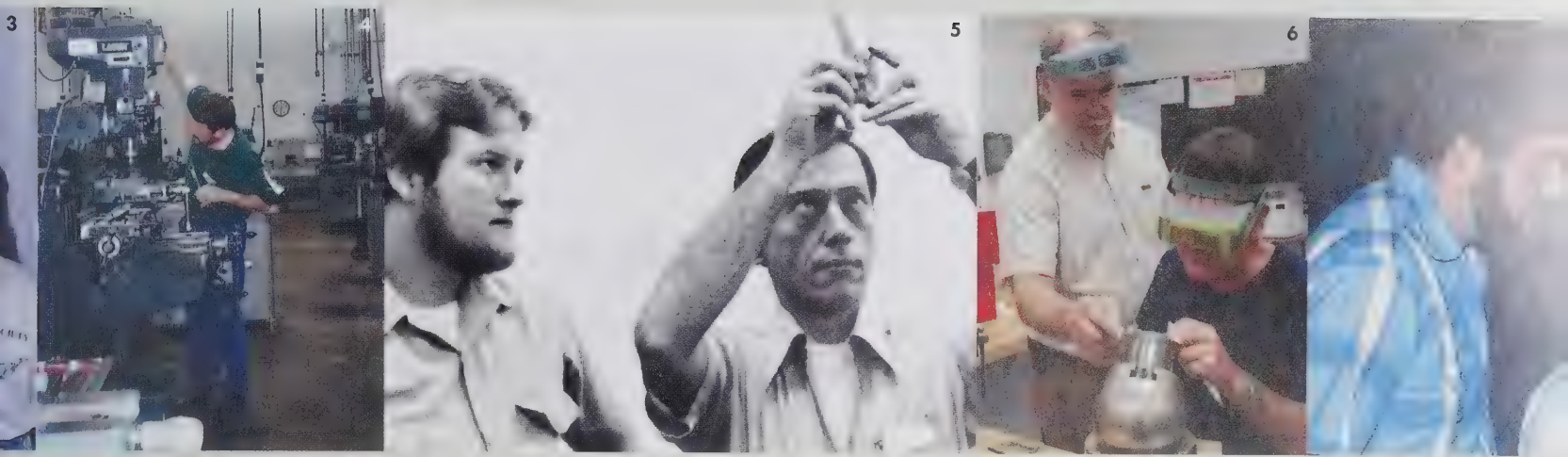


In 1985, two new instructors were hired to keep up with the teaching load: Walt Heim and Wayne Bernauer. Classes were held Monday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. and then from 6:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m. On weekends, workshops

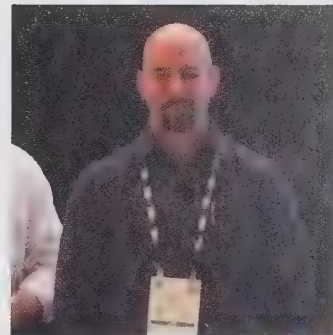
were taught by nationally-known experts in specialty areas such as engraving for firearms. The Metal Engraving certificate program was added as an offshoot of the Gunsmithing program and Jesse Houser was hired in 1985 to teach it. For the next 15 years, the team of Anderson, Bernauer, Heim and Houser would make MTI's Gunsmithing program one of the finest in the country. It would also be the source of many fireside tales, some of which should not be repeated. The following is one of the tamer tales as told by Jesse Houser:

"One year, the Metallurgy class designed and die-cast a full-size cannon. Walt Heim did the machining. When we finished the cannon, Walt wanted to proof test it on the firing range. To proof test, you have to overload it with powder so that if it was ever going to blow up, it would. Dr. Hampton was President at the time, and he was walking out to where they were building the new pottery building, right above the range's berm. Walt lit the fuse and we all ran for cover. When the cannon went off, everyone in the school heard it including Dr. Hampton. The cannon jumped back about four feet. We were checking it out when Dr. Hampton came running onto the range out of breath and yelling, 'What happened? Was anyone hurt?' I guess we scared him because he banned all use of cannons on the firing range after that."

(Jesse Houser)



Talent breeds talent and MCC's Gunsmithing program is now under the direction of Mark Dye (pictured right), a 1998 graduate of the program, and instructors Matt Mutarelli (Class of 2010, far right), Len Fagan (Class of 2006, below right), Wayne Coley (Class of 2011, below far right), and Tim Sheffield (Class of 2011). MCC's Gunsmithing program is now the largest in the country with two full-time day programs, a part-time evening, and a part-time weekend program.



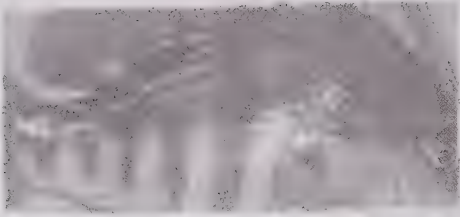
Gene Anderson (right) received the Excellence in Teaching Award in 1989



Wayne Bernauer received the Excellence in Teaching Award in 1995



Mark Dye received the Excellence in Teaching Award in 2014



Taxidermy

"We thought Taxidermy would be another natural program for our rural, hunting and fishing county. Bruce (Turner) had mentioned the idea to the sportsmen who thought it was a great idea."

(Ted Blake)

In September 1977 the first Taxidermy class was taught at MTI by licensed taxidermist and animal lover, Billy Wayne Murchison. Murchison was known for keeping a homemade zoo on his property north of Troy where he had bears, monkeys, lions, baboons, deer, goats, and exotic birds. He would send his students to his home to study his animals before beginning a taxidermy project (Courier-Tribune, July 22, 1979).

"We had no problem getting the program approved. The success of Gunsmithing and other programs had established MTI as an innovator in unique programming."

(Ted Blake)

"When Murchison left, Joe Gill, an outstanding student about to graduate, was hired to take over the program. He was a good taxidermist and a good teacher."

(Ted Blake)



Bill Murchison, 1981



Joe Gill, 1981



David Williams, 1981

Gill joined the program in June 1981. A wildlife conservationist originally from Florida, Gill brought talent “akin to that of a fine artist with oils,” (Montgomery Herald, September 24, 1981).

In 1983, Gill was appointed to the Chairman’s Wildlife Advisory Committee of the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and was presented an award for his conservation efforts. He taught day and night classes until March 1984 and continued to teach day classes until May 1986.

(James) David Williams was hired to teach evening taxidermy in 1984, and began to teach full-time day classes when Joe Gill left in 1986. David was a native of Buncombe County, NC. He joined the US Air Force in 1962 and served four tours of duty in Vietnam.

After joining the service, he practiced taxidermy part-time as a hobby. As he was stationed in many

different parts of the world during his career, he had the opportunity to mount a wide variety of game animals and fish. A six-year term in Alaska became the catalyst for his decision to make a career of taxidermy. While there, he mounted Dall sheep, black bear, mountain sheep, and Alaskan brown bear. Upon his retirement from military service in 1982, he enrolled in MTI’s taxidermy program and graduated in 1983. He opened his own business, Superior Taxidermy Studio, in Robbins, and began teaching taxidermy part-time for Montgomery Technical College in 1984.

David retired from MCC in August 2000. He passed away in 2011 at the age of 70. He is survived by his wife Diane, who was MCC’s librarian at the time David was teaching. Many of their co-workers remember watching the friendship grow between David and Diane, and they eventually married.

Mike Gillis was a taxidermy night instructor from 1986 until 1992.

"I took the two-year night class under Bill Murchison. I started teaching the night class in 1986 when David Williams was the lead instructor. I admired David. He was so talented and such a good person."

(Mike Gillis)

In 1992, McKenzie Taxidermy Supply offered him a job opportunity that he couldn't turn down. Mike continues to live in Troy, but travels extensively all over the country for McKenzie.

"We (Mike and David) encouraged our students to join the professional associations and enter shows."

We had a lot of blue ribbons on the cases we set up in the halls to display the prize-winning works."

(Mike Gillis)



Mike Gillis, 1986

Mike's unfortunate "claim to fame" as an instructor was the fact that he kept "pet" rattlesnakes:

"Yep, that was me. I like snakes and I kept some in my shop."

(Mike Gillis)

"One bit him and kept him in the hospital for two weeks."

(Bruce Turner)

In 1999, MCC Taxidermy graduate Billy Adams began teaching full-time when David Williams retired. Billy brought a different aspect to the program in that he was a former physical science instructor at Asheboro High School.

“My focus was on the chemistry and the ‘why’ they were doing certain things to their mounts.”
(Billy Adams)

Billy said the best thing about his job was the diversity of people who came to take taxidermy:

Billy Adams, 1999

A photograph of Billy Adams, a man with a beard wearing a camouflage shirt and a light blue apron, standing behind a counter. He is holding a large, colorful pheasant on a wooden surface.

“I taught people from all over the state and about six other states while I was there. From former Marine snipers suffering from PTSD to the little Filipino lady who knew every song on Rock 92. They would be thrown together for a year and would learn all about each other. It wasn't so much learning new skills as the greater satisfaction they got making friends and sometimes finding peace.”

(Billy Adams)



Adams left MCC in 2016 and was replaced by Andy Speer. Andy has been teaching evening classes since 2007 and as of this date is currently still teaching taxidermy full-time.



Forestry

Like most of the programs started at MTI, they were given a test drive as continuing education classes.

"When I first started as President in February of 1984, there were about 125 acres of land that had been clear cut and nothing was being done with it. We needed to plant it back in trees for income. About two weeks later, Monsanto called looking for a place to spray in forest land to test a product and asked to use the land for that purpose. Jeff Allen was Chairman of the Board at the time and knew the value of timber so we got approval to do it. The Forest Service planted the trees and Monsanto brought the helicopter and did the spraying and came back periodically to check on the trees. When they were done with the testing, the trees were ours. Not long after, one of my fraternity brothers, Carlyle Franklin, who was teaching or researching for NC State, approached me saying we needed a Forestry program at MTC. I was

"We were running saw-filing classes, lumber grading, Southern Pine Inspection Bureau courses, and hardwood lumber grading classes. (MTI President) Benny Hampton had a lot of contacts at NC State and put the program together."

(Ted Blake)

thinking the same thing. The idea was to transfer some of the classes into State's program. We worked setting up the curriculum, got it approved and hired David Isner to teach it. It became popular very quickly."

(Benny Hampton)

The Forestry Skills diploma program started in 1988. A consulting forester from Colerain, NC named David Isner was hired to develop the program. Only Wayne and Haywood Community Colleges had forestry programs at the time.

In 1993, David left MCC to return to private industry and a NC Forest Service ranger named Russell Strong took over and began to build the program. He approached MCC president Dr. Ted Gasper about obtaining approval for a two-year associate degree program.



TOP: Forestry student taking tree-measurement data, 1988. **MIDDLE:** David Isner (left) with student. **BOTTOM:** Forestry student Luke Wilson operating the loader.

"Dr. Gasper gave me 20 hours of administrative assistance and we put together all the research and data required by the Community College System and the State Board. The associate degree in Forest Management Technology was approved in May 1994."

(Russell Strong)

night pulling materials from textbooks, the public domain, and their own experiences.

"We got permission from the textbook companies to . . . put together course packs with everything relevant to forest technicians, and the publishers published them for us. I remember working long hours and late nights and our wives calling asking when we were coming home."

(Russell Strong)

Registered Forester and arborist Mike Thompson was hired in July 1995 to help teach the additional classes.

It was not unusual for Mike and Russell to be in their office (a closet with two desks, two chairs and one phone) until seven o'clock at



"We knew what the students needed to know. Russ from the public sector, me from the private sector. We were able to concentrate on what really mattered."

(Mike Thompson)



Mike Thompson



NC Forest Ranger Russell Strong & friend

At the time, there was a single, old logging road through the 125-acre forest.

"From that one road we now have three-to-four miles of roads, fire lines off different roads and separating different units that we've been managing close to 25 years now. Students played a major role in making improvements. It's a huge asset. Many schools have to bus their students to the forest. We just walk out our back door."

(Russell Strong)

Over the years as the program grew, it moved to different places on campus, but Russell's dream was always dedicated to a space for the program.



"I had designs and sketches that I made with square footage and where everything would go. I approached administration on several occasions but the budget was never there. On the fifth try everything came into alignment and they let us build a building. That was in 2006."

(Russell Strong)



"I'm grateful for administration for carrying us through the lean years. It's a happy situation where our graduates are now hiring graduates, and word of mouth is bringing in a steady stream of new students."

(Mike Thompson)

Mike made known his proposed retirement for May 2018 and Dylan Hurley, a 2012 graduate of the program, will be filling some large boots. As of this date, Russell Strong still heads the Forestry department.

THE MTI FAMILY

*"I tell people I got married
twice in 1973. Once to my
wife and once to MTI."*

(Barney Greene)

*"Pat Masbburn Brady, along with all
the other employees, helped move
into the MCC's first home, on the
new campus on Page Street. To keep
an administrator on site for night
students, each department took turns
working second shift one day a week.
By then, Pat had married and her
only child, Jolee, came to work with
mom after day care for a few hours.
Pat worked in the reception area on
those nights and Jolee was such a joy,
she was a magnet for everyone in the
building to come by and help spoil her."*

(Mary Anderson)

*"Phil focused on students. He was
a good listener and had the ability
to see things from a student's
perspective. He didn't ask what they
wanted to major in, but what they
wanted to be."*

(Dale McInnis)



Russell Strong (left) and student, 2014



Ellen Turner (standing), circa 1970

"The instructors here foster a camaraderie, they're geared for your success. In my time here as a student I noticed the instructors were extremely approachable. Many times I would be able to get in touch with them after hours, and even on weekends. They're very, very interested not just in your education, but in your success."

*(Daniel Alexi,
Forestry class of 2012)*

"MTI didn't have the money to hire a night staff, so we all taught day and night classes. Many nights when we finished classes at 10 p.m., Chancy and Bob Roberts would come to the house. Chancy would cook up country ham and I'd make biscuits for our supper. Chancy worked in the office and Bob taught industrial maintenance. Occasionally between day and night classes, someone would bring a grill and they'd all pitch in for steaks for a meal on campus. As Bruce likes to say, we found the fun wherever we could."

(Ellen Turner)

"I remember our first Christmas party hosted by Bruce and Ellen Turner in their home. We had about a dozen people in that first graduating class from the nursing program, secretarial science and business, so we all knew each other and all the staff. Even though I was going to school full time during the day and working in the evening, we found time to have some good times."

*(Harold VanDerveer,
Business Administration class of 1969)*



Photo courtesy of Bruce and Ellen Turner

"There were lots of interesting students who excelled in their fields of study. It wasn't unusual for employees to be good friends with students. One curriculum student (I think his name was Jim) made a habit of discussing things with Ted Blake and complimenting him on the nice ties he wore every day. So on graduation day, Mr. Blake removed his tie and gave it to Jim as a keepsake reminder of his accomplishments."

(Doris Haywood)





"I looked forward to early morning coffee and conversations on third hall where vocational students gathered before class. MTI was a wonderfully unique place."

(Ted Blake)

"I sometimes shoveled coal at the old Board of Education building. George Simmons was the custodian at that time. He was an older gentleman and I felt like he could use the help, so I would help him shovel coal into the boiler. I did anything someone would allow me to do."

(Barney Greene)

"We had a custodian who was disabled and sometimes slow, but he was serious about his job. One of his favorite foods was fresh fish. So on the occasions when the president, Marvin Miles, went on a fishing excursion, he always brought a bundle of fish wrapped in newspaper for Willie."

(Doris Haywood)

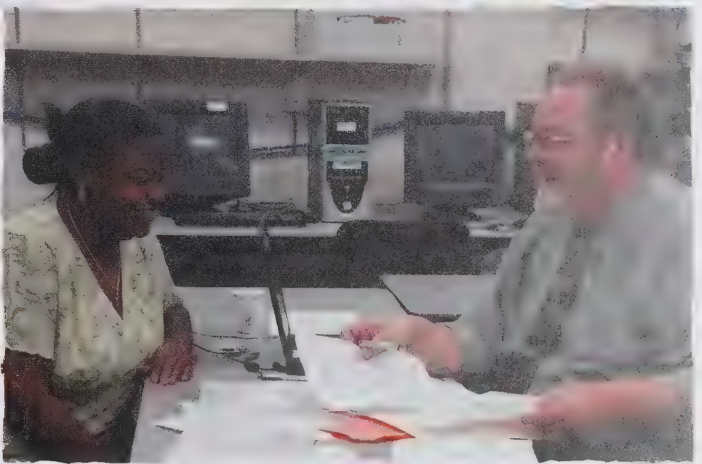
"Once, I got a call in the middle of the night from two students at the magistrate's office who had been charged with underage drinking and having a gun in the passenger compartment of a car. I bailed them out, and warned them that this was their one and only young and stupid mistake that would be tolerated. Sometimes I listened to their problems. More than once, instructors bought supplies when a student didn't have the money and paid semester tuition when that would allow one to stay in school."

(Gene Anderson)

"What stands out to me the most about MCC is how dedicated the instructors are to the students. Here you feel more like family. MCC is a wonderful place to learn. It feels like home. It's close and the instructors are always willing to help make you feel like you're doing the best you can and they want to give you the best they can."

*(Sammy Clelland,
Practical Nursing class of 2014)*





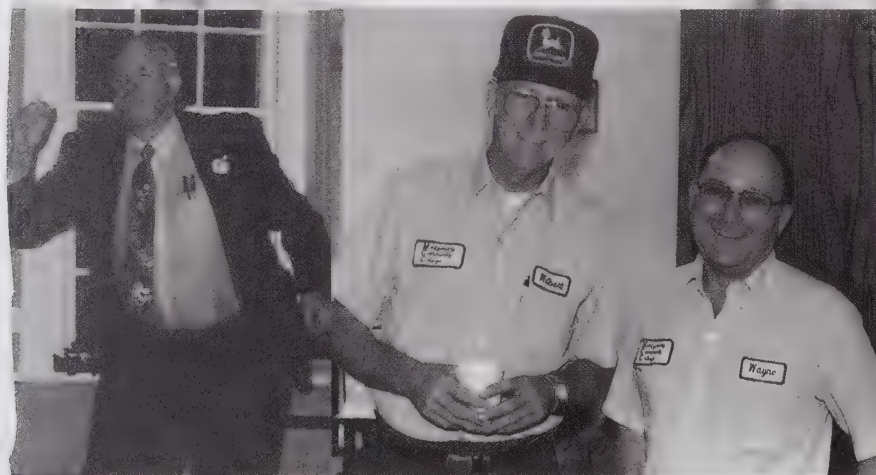
"I can't tell you how many pairs of pants I have hemmed, buttons I have sewn on and graduation gowns I have pressed, and how many real worried moms I have consoled. Our support staff did whatever we needed to do for students. We were all counselors. I have seen faculty and administrators pay electric bills and buy groceries for students. It was truly a family atmosphere."

(Kathy Harris)



"I was at MCC for 36 years and when I looked back on it before my final year I thought, 'Where did the time go?' I was enjoying it so much, I didn't keep up with the time."

(Barney Greene)



"Before every Christmas break, students and staff would have a potluck lunch. One year, one of the taxidermy students brought in a roast possum. Some people tasted it, I think, but most of us couldn't get past the apple in its mouth."

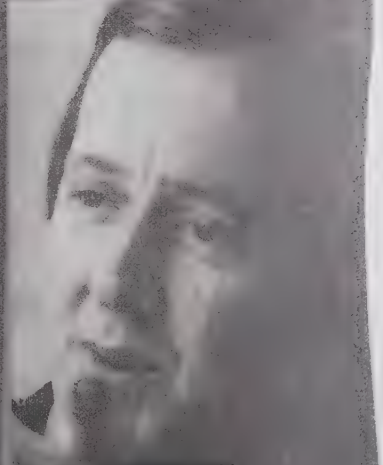
(Talbert Myers)

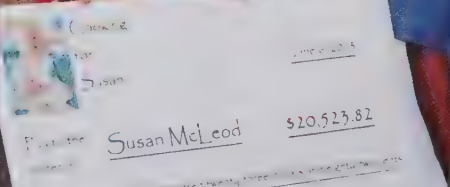
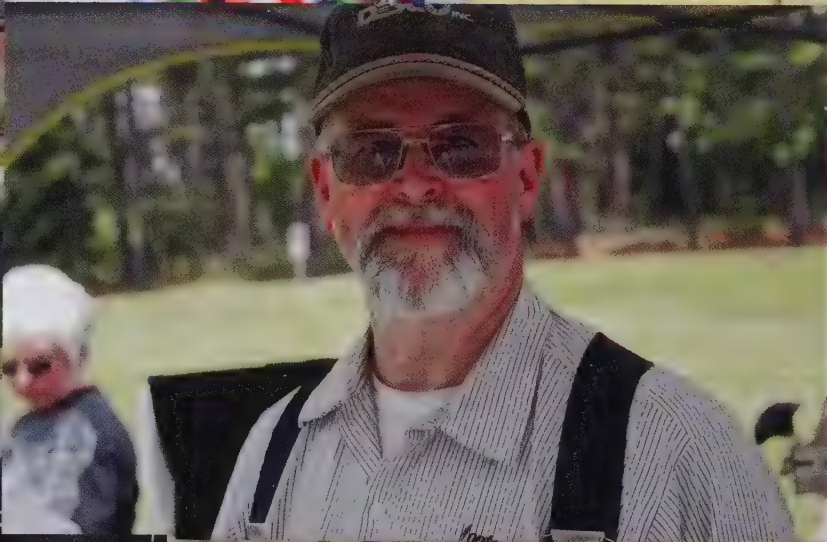




"Almost everyone I worked with for the first 25 years—we had people who cared so much about coworkers it was like family. You could rely on almost anyone. If you had a need, make the need known and they would help you any way they could. Bruce (Turner) was one of those people who never failed you. Always there for you. He sensed when someone had a need and he'd keep talking to you until it came out."

(Barney Greene)







ON MAKING AN IMPACT

"MCC has a unique identity that separates it from other colleges in the (community college) system and gives it a unique brand. Everyone here (at MCC) has always felt like they were fighting for the people."

(Dale McInnis)

"Being almost novices when we began teaching at MTI in the early 1970s, we did not fully understand the significant, long-lasting impact this (college) would make on the citizens . . . Most importantly, we caught the contagious excitement of prospective students when they mustered up the courage to make a face-to-face visit to inquire about this new educational system and learned that what they had heard was indeed true—that quality education, offered at a reasonable price, was available within driving distance of their homes."

*(Sue Agee Jarvis,
Secretarial Science instructor & counselor,
1974–1982)*



OPPOSITE PAGE: Sue Agee Jarvis, 1982. **BELOW:** James Boyd (right) began his own upholstery business after taking an upholstery training course with Harry Bishop (left) and continuing education studies with Mrs. Martha McIver (center). Boyd said that "MTI and its staff should have full credit for preparing me for this new venture." (Montgomery Herald) **BOTTOM:** Graduation night 2016.

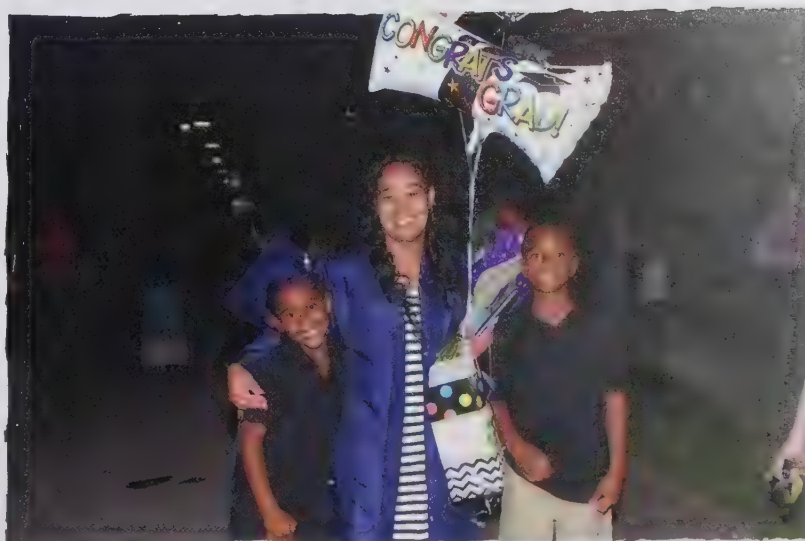


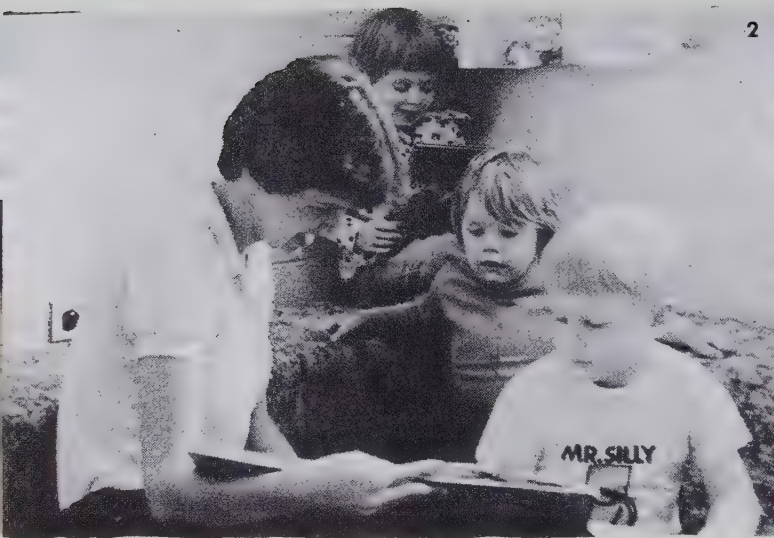
"It was so rewarding to see people work through their insecurities and work so hard to learn, and then be so proud of what they had accomplished. They were smart and talented people. Most of the illiteracy was lack of opportunity. We had some outstanding teachers, too. Novella Turner, Linnie Comer, Sarah Ledwell, Lillian Robinson—I learned from every one of them. They, and everybody who worked at MTI, were always willing to go the extra mile. The college has provided opportunities for people to begin to learn and grow, to do things they would not have even started if the college hadn't opened the door to the possibility."

(Talbert Myers)

"There is no way to place a value on (MCC). The real value is for each individual who takes advantage of the opportunity to gain knowledge, learn skills and get better jobs. Something in their lives becomes better because they were there. It would be hard to find a family in Montgomery County that has not been touched by the college."

(Ted Blake)





"There were mill employees who lost their jobs to NAFTA. They were hesitant, even fearful and sometimes defensive about their lack of formal education, but with encouragement they became successful employees in other fields. Their work ethic made them successful in school and in other jobs. The good MCC has done for this county cannot be measured. People are working who are so proud of their education and training and the opportunities they would never have had without the college."

*(Wanda Jackson,
Head of Business Department,
1991–2013)*

"When North Carolina required CDLs (commercial drivers license) for every truck driver, it was traumatic for drivers whose jobs their whole lives were driving a truck. We would see them sitting in the parking lot, too intimidated to come in the building. Bruce (Turner) was so kind and encouraging, he made them believe they could do it, and they did."

(Wanda Jackson)

TRAIN TO BE A PROFESSIONAL TRUCK DRIVER

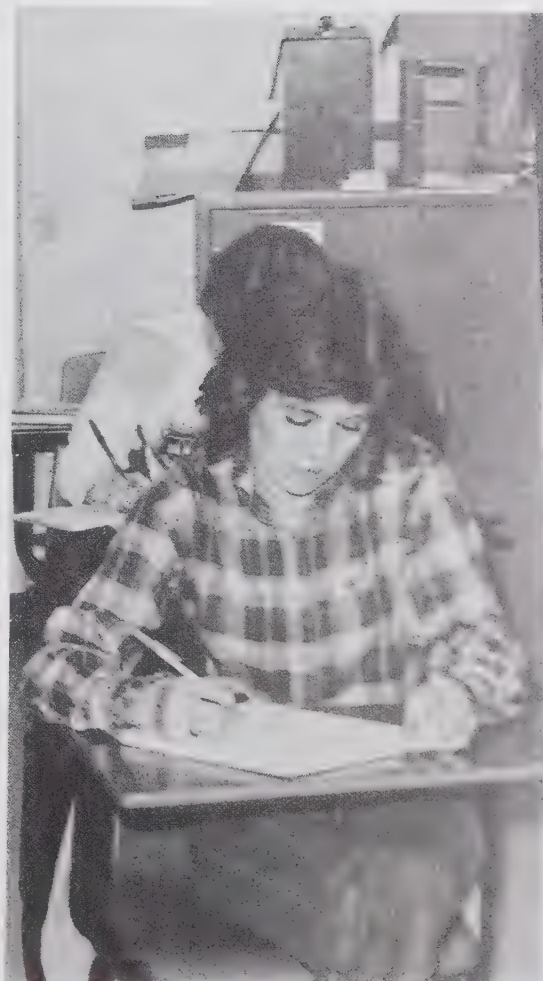
EARN \$18,000-\$25,000 STARTING SALARY
 DAY or EVENING CLASSES OCTOBER 23, 1995 – MARCH 1, 1996
 CLASS HOURS APPROVED FOR V.A. BENEFITS
 9:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M. Mon.-Fri.
 4:30 P.M.-9:30 P.M. Mon.-Fri.
 (Enrollment limited to 16 in each section.)
 INSTRUCTION BY EXPERIENCED DRIVER TRAINERS
 TOTAL COST \$237.50 FOR IN-STATE RESIDENTS. LOW COST PUBLIC EDUCATION
 ENDORSED BY N.C. TRUCKING ASSOCIATION.

**APPLY TODAY
CALL (910) 576-6222**
CLASSES BEGIN OCTOBER 23, 1995
 TRAIN AT
MONTGOMERY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
 P.O. Box 787, Troy, N.C. 27321
 Registration Deadline — October 16, 1995
 PROGRAM CONDUCTED BY
NORTH CAROLINA TRUCK DRIVER TRAINING SCHOOL
 A DIVISION OF JOHNSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE
 AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION



"A man came into my office with a dictionary in his hand and said he wanted the class to get his GED®. I gave him the preliminary test and he aced it. That was a smart man. He aced the official GED®, took a trade course and had a successful career. All he needed was a boost to get started."

(Phil Kissell)



Picture 1-Graduates of Truck Driver Training circa 1996. **Picture 2**-"Cindy Stutts, a student at Montgomery Technical College, develops a long-standing interest in children by working with children at MTC daycare facility." (Montgomery Herald, 1983) **Picture 3**- 68-year-old Mary Trogdon, referred to as "Grandma Moses" by the Montgomery Herald, in an art course at Montgomery Technical College. (Montgomery Herald, July 14, 1983) **Picture 4**-Another proud 2016 graduation family. **OPPOSITE:** Truck Driver Training School ad, 1995. **ABOVE**, left: 75-year-old "Emma Griffin, wearing her first cap and gown, poses with husband Ermon on graduation day when she received her diploma in Pottery Production from MTC." (Montgomery Herald, 1984) Right: "One of 42 students enrolled in the Extended Day School Program. The program is a vehicle to enable students who can't continue their regular high school programs to complete their education." (Montgomery Herald, 1983)

Dr. Chad Bledsoe



Dr. Bledsoe greets former college President Dr. Benny Hampton.

DURING HIS FIRST SIX MONTHS AS President, Dr. Chad Bledsoe met with employees, retirees, Montgomery County School officials, local government, civic organizations, and area businesses to gather information about the school and the county. By January 2016 the wheels were turning and changes began to take place at MCC.

Negotiations had begun to implement an early college high school on campus and in the fall semester of 2017 Montgomery County Early College was established.

In March 2016 the Connect NC Bond vote passed and provided MCC with \$6.3 million for renovations, repairs, or new

construction. In preparation for the eventual passage, Dr. Bledsoe initiated plans for updating all infrastructure in existing buildings on campus. As of this writing, plans for updating Blair Hall (Building 100) are being prepared for review.

The following curriculum programs were approved by the North Carolina Community College System since January 2016: Associate in Fine Arts: Music, Associate in Engineering, Medical Office Administration, Nurse Aide, Welding Technology, as well as several new certificates.

The Gunsmithing program expanded with funding from the Golden Leaf Foundation. A new lab was equipped and a second cohort of day students was inaugurated in the fall 2017 semester, making Montgomery Community College's Gunsmithing program the largest in the country.

"Dr. Bledsoe has been a good collaborator in working with county schools and seeing the vision in how this can help the students in Montgomery County. It's been a great experience so far and we're looking forward to our next cohort of students."

*(Dr. Heather Seawell,
Principal, Montgomery County Early College)*

Dr. Chad A. Bledsoe

6th President of Montgomery Community College
2015-present



From: Surry County, NC

B.S. Western Carolina University

M.B.A. Appalachian State University

Ph.D. University of NC at Greensboro

"Dr. Chad Bledsoe was the right person at the right time when he became the President of Montgomery Community College. He is uniquely equipped to oversee the changes that are in progress to take MCC into its next 50 years. Dr. Bledsoe is a man of integrity who always has the best interest of the college and its students foremost in his leadership."

(Claudia Bultbuis)

APPENDIX

Buildings

115

Trailblazers

116-117

Board of Trustees

118-123

Buildings



Blair Hall—1977

First campus, originally called Building 100

1975: Col. Joseph Reese Blair deeded 76.46 acres on Page Street for a campus for MTI

1975, October 5: Montgomery County citizens passed a bond for construction of 64,000 sq. ft. of space

1977, June 12: building was dedicated

1982: an 8,753 sq. ft. addition was completed on the building

1992: Blair Auditorium was named and dedicated to honor the late Col. Joseph Reese Blair

Building 500—1987

First called Heat Pump Skills Center

1987: capital funds used to build the Heat Pump Skills training facility

Training equipment was furnished via a grant from the NC Alternative Energy Corp. and donations from the air conditioning & heating industry

2004: Building 500 underwent a 3,000 sq. ft. renovation and now houses the Industrial & Electrical Technology programs on one side and Criminal Justice & Basic Law Enforcement Training programs on the other

Pottery Building—1990

1990, January: the county allocated \$25,000 for a new pottery building

MCC's maintenance department completed much of the work to save costs

1990, September: 3,000 sq. ft. Pottery Building opened its doors for the first time to 46 pottery students

Capel Hall—1998

First called Business, Industry, Technology, Resource Center (BITRC), then Building 200

1992: \$2.6 million in matching funds were allocated for new construction through a bond passage

1994: Montgomery County School Board transferred approximately four acres to the facility

1998: the 44,800 sq. ft. building was dedicated; the building cost \$5.2 million

Forestry Building—2009

2009: a 6,400 sq. ft. building was built for the Forest Management Technology program. Funds appropriated for the project included \$250,000 from the county with an additional \$374,253 in county funds from a settlement on Building 200. An additional \$311,372 in state construction funds were expended for a total cost of \$935,625. Funds to pave the parking lot came from the Forestry program's timber revenue account. The building was opened in August 2009.

Trailblazers

As named by the Montgomery Community College
Board of Trustees, September 7, 2017.



1. The **citizens** of Montgomery County, **officials** of our towns and county, and **industry partners** who have contributed to the formation, growth, and sustaining of the college
2. **J.F. Allen**—Board of Trustees (1969-1989), Board Chair (1983-1989), pioneer in the legislature
3. **Gene and Mary Anderson**—Gene (1978-2001) initiated the Gunsmithing Program, and Mary served as the first Public Information Officer (1979-1981)
4. **Joseph Reese Blair*** and family—Donated land for the campus, and have been life-long champions of MCC
5. **Wayne Bernauer**—Grew the Gunsmithing Program (1985-2015) to national recognition
6. **Ted Blake**—Grew with the college to become Dean of Instruction; established the Gunsmithing Program (1971-1983), and was a member of the Board of Trustees (1995-2003)
7. **David Bland**—First President (1967-1971), leading with zeal for adult education
8. **Peggy Brewer**—Early and devoted employee (1969-1998)
9. **Jesse Capel**—First Board of Trustees, first Board Chair (1967-1983)
10. **Gelynda and Arron Capel**—Gelynda has served the college as Board member (1985-present), Board Chair (1994-2014), and as a couple they have made many generous contributions
11. **Mary Chesson**—Served as Faculty (1977-1989 and 2011-2013), Vice President of Instruction (2004-2011), and Interim President (2014-2015)
12. **Earle Connelly***—Crucial to the development and growth of the MCC Foundation. Board member (1994-2014)
13. **Eddie B. Coleman***—First Board of Trustees (1967-1979)
14. **Brady Dickson**—Influential fundraiser for the college, supportive as a County Commissioner
15. **Mike Ferree**—Director of the Pottery Program (1974-2013) and responsible for its stellar reputation
16. **Zedith Teague Garner***—First instructor in the Pottery Program (1970-1973)
17. **Garland S. Garris***—Representative who promoted the charter for the college in the legislature
18. **Barney Greene**—First Facilities Director and devoted employee (1972-2009)
19. **Benny Hampton**—Third President (1984-1992), for building curriculum programs and educational opportunities
20. **Guy Hankins***—Chairman of the first MCC Foundation fund drive
21. **Kathy Harris**—Grew with the college to become Vice President of Student Services (1980-2010)
22. **Rick Harris**—Supportive as County Commissioner and Foundation leader
23. **Charles Highsmith***—Supportive as a County Commissioner and benefactor

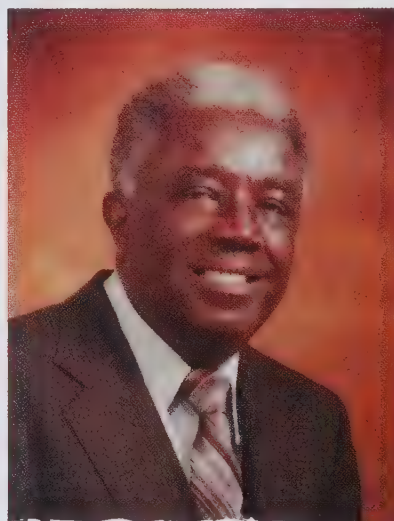
24. **Anna and Russ Hollers**—Anna served on the Board of Trustees (2002-2017); Russ was the college attorney for many years until 2015; both have provided strong support to the college
25. **Wanda Jackson**—Grew with the college to become Head of the Business Department (1991-2013)
26. **Lenue T. James***—Newspaper editor who supported the college in print and in action; Board member (1983-2007), Board Chair (1992-1994)
27. **Shirley Jenkins**—Originator of the Nursing Program (1968-1972)
28. **Virginia Jones***—Second employee who served as bookkeeper; “Mother Jones” to all (1968-mid 1980s)
29. **Robert B. Jordan III**—Strong supporter at home and in the legislature, and a generous benefactor
30. **John Kern***—First Board of Trustees (1967-1980)
31. **Frank Kersey***—Board Member (1981-1992), Board Chair (1989-1992)
32. **Mary P. Kirk**—Fifth President (1999-2014), building the connection to the community by growing recognition and by fundraising
33. **Phil Kissell**—Grew with the college to become Vice President of Instruction (1970-2009)
34. **George Knight**—Board Member (1987-1992), supported the college as a County Commissioner
35. **Robert L. Liles***—First Board of Trustees (1967-1981)
36. **J.C. McRae***—First Board of Trustees (1967-1987)
37. **Marvin Miles***—Second President (1971-1983), for building a campus home for MCC
38. **Hubert Moss***—First Board of Trustees (1967-1989)
39. **Judy Miller**—Early employee, teacher of Business Education (1971-2000)
40. **Talbert Myers**—Grew with the college to become Vice President of Continuing Education (1981-1999)
41. **Aaron W. Plyler***—Legislator who secured matching funds for the MCC Foundation
42. **Bob Qualls**—Originated the Criminal Justice Program which trained numerous Sheriffs and officers in the county (1976-2005)
43. **Paul Russell***—Worked passionately behind the scenes for MCC, and supportive as a County Commissioner
44. **D.T. Scarborough***—Supporter of the college as a County Commissioner Board Member (1999-1998), President of the MCC Foundation
45. **Harold A. Scott***—First Board of Trustees (1967-1971)
46. **Beth Smith**—Grew with the college and serves as Vice President of Student Services (1986-present)
47. **Russell Strong**—Developed and grew the Forestry Program (1993-present)
48. **Frederick L. Taylor***—First Board of Trustees (1967-1977)
49. **Ellen and Bruce Turner**—Early employees of the college. Bruce (1968-2002) was hired as Director of Learning Resources and held numerous positions, serving twice as Interim President. Ellen (1968-1970) provided any support needed, often including meals and lodging
50. **Harold VanDerveer**—Strong supporter, successful business graduate of MCC

*deceased

Board of Trustees



Jesse Capel
1967-1983



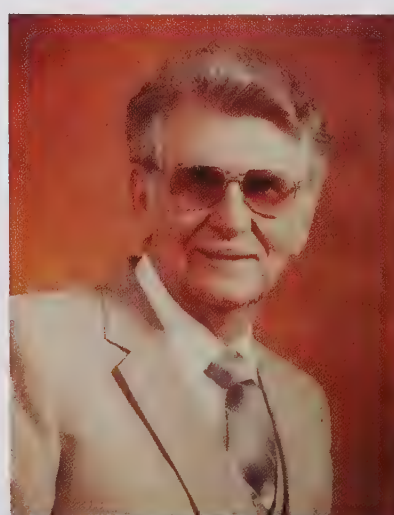
Eddie Coleman
1967-1979



John Kern
1967-1980



Robert Liles, Jr.
1967-1981



J.C. McRae
1967-1987

Not Pictured:

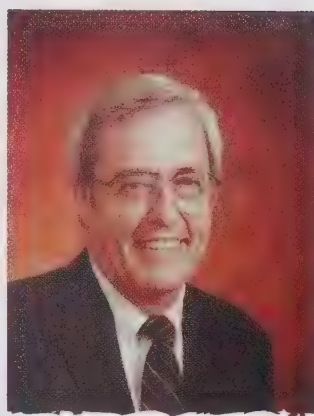
Hubert Moss
1967-1969

Harold Scott
1967-1971

Frederick Taylor
1967-1977



J.F. Allen
1969-1989



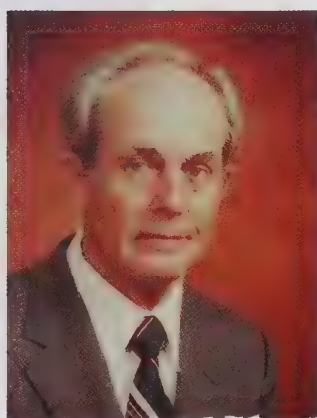
Robert Jordan, III.
1971-1974



Charles Bruton, Sr.
1971-1977



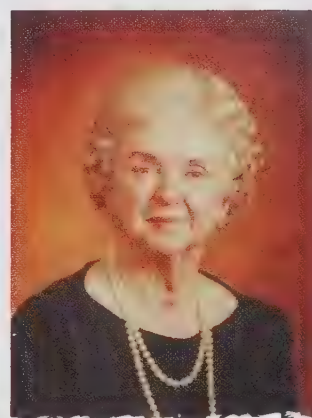
Ann Kirk
1971-1974



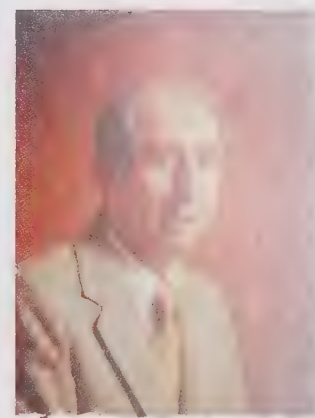
Frances McCallum
1974-1981



Anna Parker
1974-1985



Alleen Blackwell
1975-1984



James Owen
1977-1983



Paul Hurley
1977-1987



Elijah Peterson
1978-1985



Hector McNair
1979-1996



Frank Kersey
1981-1992



Jerry Ingram
1981-1989



David Whitesell, Sr.
1981-1984



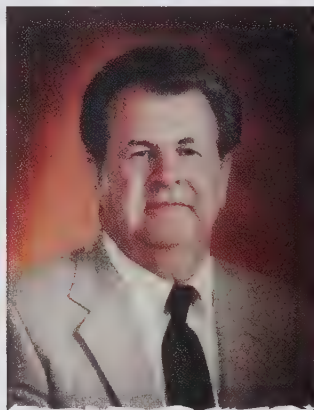
Lenue James
1983-2008



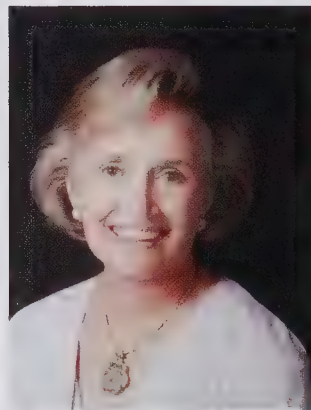
Roy Maness
1983-1991



James Allen, Jr.
1984-1990
1993-1997



Lowell Russell
1984-1991
2003-2015



Gelynda Capel
1985-



Jean Miller
1985-1992



George Knight, Jr.
1987-1992



Colon Blake
1988-1989



Robert Caudill
1989-1990



Louise Dorsett
1989-2009



Gregory Blake
1989-1992



Patricia Brown
1990-1993



Tina Kissell
1990-1994



Winston Dozier
1991-1992



Forest Irons
1991-1995



John Cagle
1992-2000



Robert Jordan, IV.
1992-1995



H.G. McCallum
1993-1996



Johnny McKinnon, Jr.
1992-



David Hudson
1993-1994



Earle Connelly
1994-2014



D.T. Scarborough
1995-1998



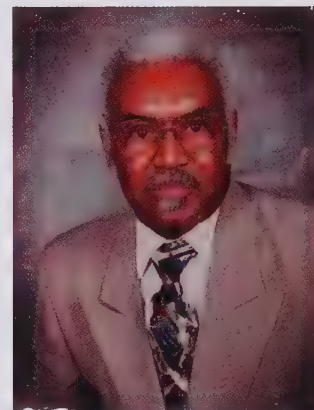
Ted Blake
1995-2003



Andrea Marshall
1995-



Charles Johnson
1996-2008



Ivory Richardson
1996-2004



Diane Maness
1997-2013



Benny Hampton
1998-2002



Andres Hernandez
2000-2003



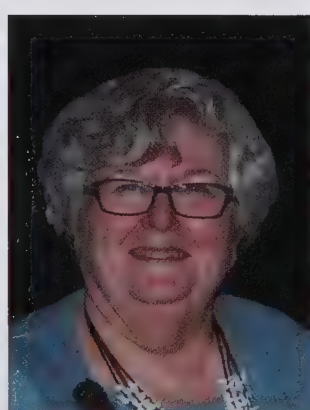
Anna Hollers
2002-2017



Ricardo Romero
2003-2015



Erie Greene
2004-2008



Claudia Bulthuis
2008-



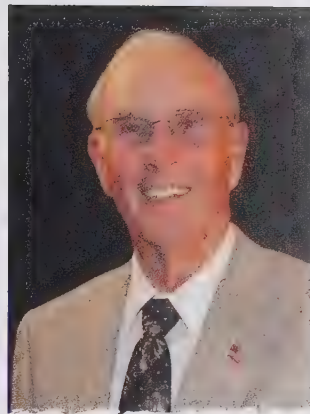
Paula Covington
2008-



Samuel Martin
2008-2016



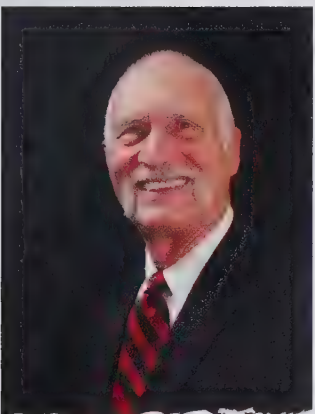
Ruth Morris
2009-2013



Ron Kincaid
2013-2017



Sharon Cupples
2013-



Gordon Knowles
2014-



Phillip Absher
2015-



Susan Eggleston
2015-



George Gilbreath
2016-

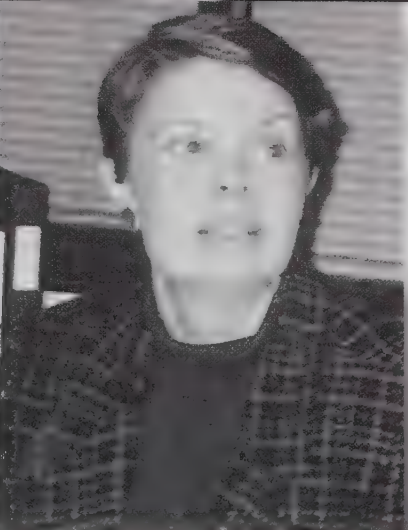
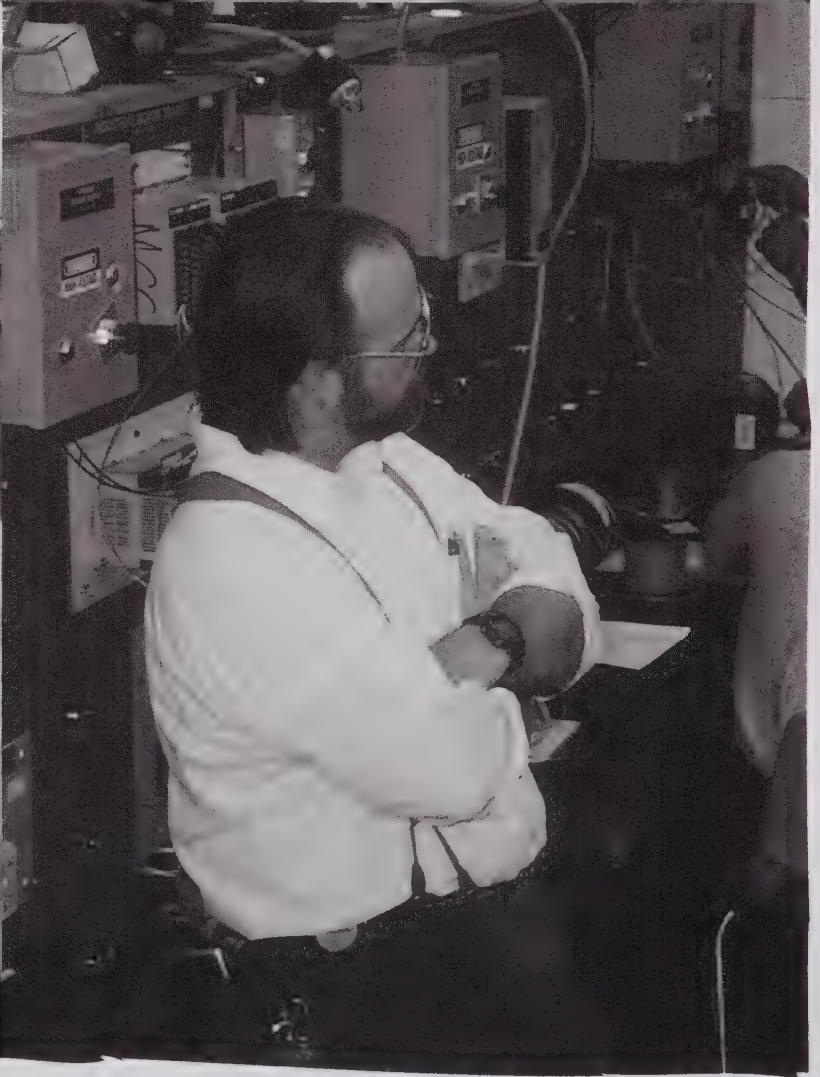
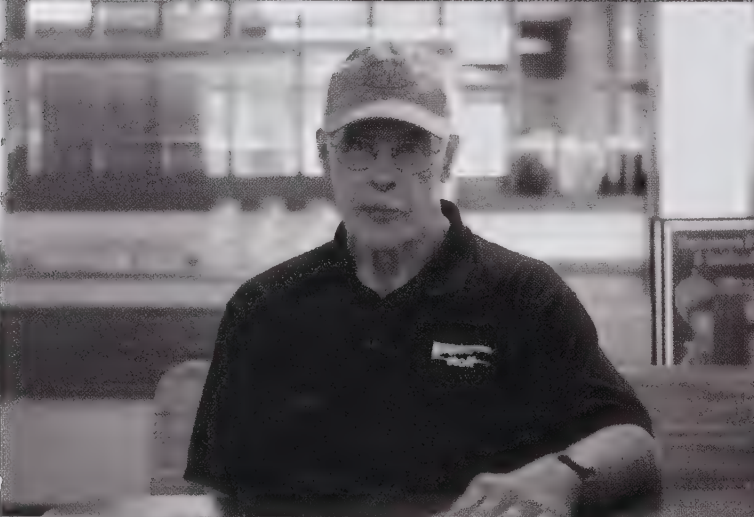
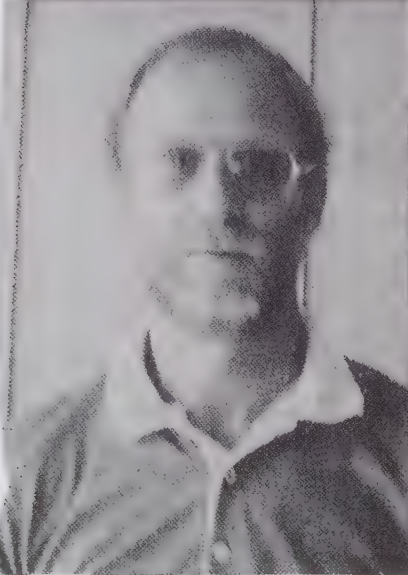
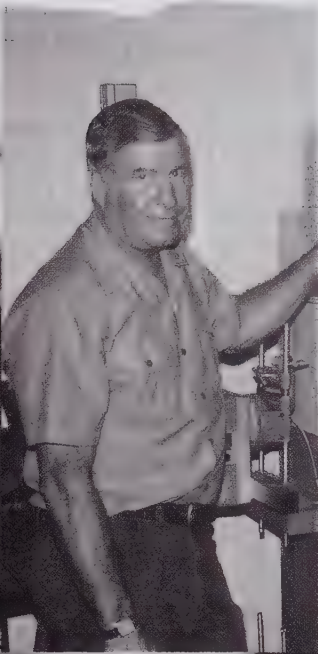
Not Pictured:

Edgar Anderson
1971-1977
1978-1985

Eleanor Chappell
1971-1973

Michael Daley
1987-1988

David Williams
1992-1992
1998-





In Memory

Those who passed away while in service to Montgomery Community College



Steve Hamilton
1984-2005



Donna Rush
2004-2013



Sandra McCallum
1996-2009



Mary Gaffney
1972-1991



Roger McIntyre
2004-2015
(DOD-2016)



Susan McLeod
1997-2014

Not Pictured: Doris Gardner
1986-1995

"Sammy" William Jackson
2007-2011

“Sometimes the things that we do, the dreams that we have will be for people that we will never know. Dream your dreams, work hard at achieving them. You don’t know what the outcome may be.”

Claudia Bulthuis, Chairman of the Board of Trustees

